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the VOICE

DORDT COLLEGE

SPRING 2001
VOLUME 45 NUMBER 4

“

Physical, emotional,
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”



Kara Plooster did her student teaching this spring under Marilyn Hielkema, a Dordt alum who teaches at Calvin Christian School in Minneapolis.

Middle school endorsement draws many students



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Increasing the number
of women on faculty

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Senior does “placement”
in college teaching

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Alum writes episode of
“Touched By An Angel”

Sally Jongsma

The middle school years are a time of contrast and often tension. A student may play with dolls one day and pore over *Teen* magazine the next. Another student may unexpectedly move from average height to tallest in the class in the space of a few months. The pressures that such changes place on children can greatly affect how able they are to learn, say Dordt education professors Dennis Vander Plaats and Barb Hoekstra.

“There probably isn’t another time—except maybe when a woman is pregnant—that a person remembers going through such dramatic physical changes,” says Hoekstra. A five-foot-ten eighth grade girl may walk stoop-shouldered, smarting under the taunts of a four-foot-ten eighth grade boy intent on building his own self-image. A coordinated seventh grader can have his dreams of being a high school basketball player dashed because his teammates grow before he does and he loses a year of playing time.

Physical, emotional, social, spiritual, and intellectual growth lunge ahead in these years—but at different speeds and at different times for different students. Many feel vulnerable and uncertain about themselves, often making it difficult for them to concentrate on school work.

“Teachers need to be able to detect what

individual students are facing, not just from one day to the next but often from one minute to the next, if they are to provide a good environment for learning,” says Hoekstra. If a teacher treats a student like a child, the student may be offended; if she treats him like an adult, the student may feel overwhelmed. Hoekstra would not say that a teacher has to spend all of her time trying to determine what mood her students are in, but that she should understand the changes taking place and be ready to deal with their impact on learning.

In fact, Hoekstra asks her college students in Education 216, The Middle Level Child, to examine their feelings about those years. In many cases, she says, they are still smarting from uncomfortable events and situations. “If they can’t deal with it in their past, they won’t be able to deal with it well as teachers,” she says.

Sarah Vriend, who did her student teaching in Holland, Michigan, this spring, described some of the situations she dealt with. “In one day one of my middle school students asked me if I commute from Dordt to Holland each day. Another asked me what physical limits an eighth grader should have while dating. Another cried because he got a B on a quiz.” She adds, “You hear people reminisce about college days or working days, but interestingly you never hear someone say they’d like to go back to puberty or middle school.”

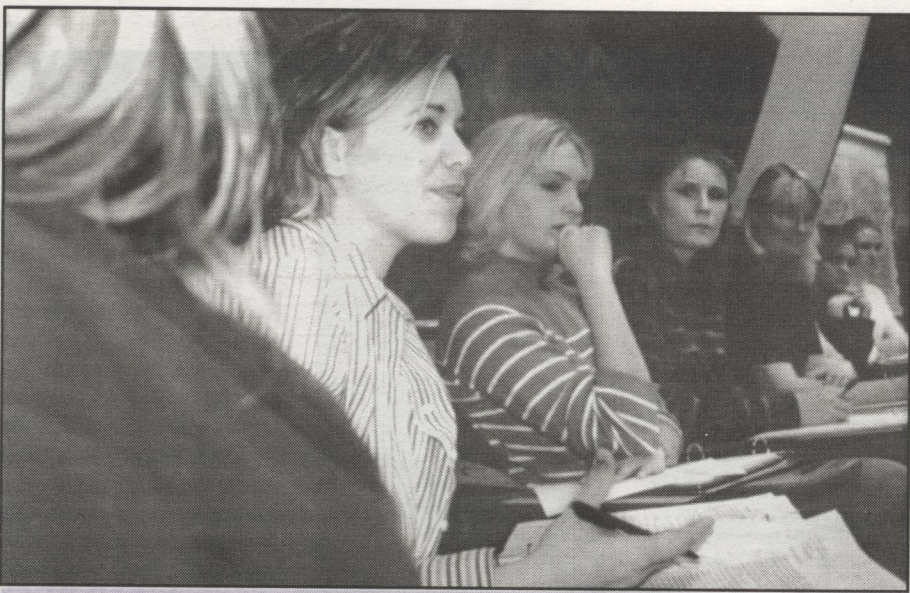
For all of these reasons, it is crucial for schools to offer a developmentally appropriate educational program, says Vander Plaats. Vander Plaats and the rest of Dordt’s education department believe that a middle school model does the best job of helping middle school children learn in the midst of so much change.

“The middle school should not prepare students for the next level of school by giving them that level,” he says. Unlike the traditional junior high in which students move from room to room, with a different teacher for each subject—following more of a high school model—middle school students often keep the same teacher or small team of teachers throughout the day. Their study is less discipline-oriented and more topical, with many hands-on and exploratory learning opportunities. In addition, competition is downplayed.

“Good middle schools are friendly and safe, yet academically challenging,” says Vander Plaats. Teachers and adults in the school are advocates and mentors as well as encouragers and leaders.

A good middle school creates a flexible environment in which students with varying interests and abilities can explore topics and discover things about the world around them. It encourages students to get involved in a variety of activities—usually in a

continued on page two



Middle school teachers take a broad range of required courses so they are ready to teach subjects across the curriculum.

Department stresses integrated approach

“An integrated approach will not only help students understand that the whole creation is interrelated, but will spur them to service....”

Continued from page one

non-competitive way. It encourages students to treat each other with dignity and to be responsible for their own behavior. The middle school also works closely with families and communities.

The ideal middle school takes an integrated approach to life and learning, which fits very well with a Christian understanding of the world and how we are to live in it, says Vander Plaats. The artificial segmentation that occurs in the traditional curriculum can lead to a misunderstanding of the interrelatedness of God's handiwork. An integrated/interdisciplinary approach, Vander Plaats believes, will not only help students understand that the whole creation is interrelated, but will spur them to service as they learn about the impact one aspect of life has on another.

To help students see the connections between subjects or between different areas of study, most middle school teachers work in

teams. They share their expertise as they teach integrated units centered around particular topics, incorporating social studies, language arts, mathematics, science, and other academic areas.

Vander Plaats believes that this more integrated approach, in which students work with teachers who know them well and with a group of students who form bonds with each other, is a wonderful way to move from the more holistic elementary school classroom to the more specialized study that often occurs in the high school setting.

That is not to say that once students get out of middle school it's okay to leave integration of learning experiences behind and depend more on specialization, Vander Plaats quickly points out. In fact, he and others in Dordt's education department have recently written a document for Calvin Christian School in Minneapolis that lays out a vision for a developmentally responsive high school that promotes a more integrated approach as well. "Even in college we shouldn't be so specialized that we lose sight of interrelations between fields of study," he says. But it is particularly important at the developmental stage of middle school students to shape learning through integrated units that help them make sense of all of the parts when so much is changing around them.

The team work required for such an integrated approach requires that teachers have time to work together. Middle schools often schedule planning times for teacher teams into the regular daily schedule so that teachers can both discover the connections between their areas of emphasis and find ways to present them effectively. They need to have time to write interdisciplinary units together.

Some schools schedule time for teachers to spend one afternoon a week in planning, while people from the community come in to teach mini courses or "exploratories" that allow students to explore special gifts or

interests they may have, Vander Plaats says.

"It sounds like a lot of work and it is. It's easier to close the classroom door and do your own thing," says Vander Plaats, who taught middle school for twenty-four years. But he believes that using our gifts to build the body of Christ means working together to provide the best education we can for middle school students. Teachers need to draw connections and, to some extent, let students

Did you begin college wanting to be a teacher?

Karen Netz: Yes, I think I have always wanted to teach.

Sarah Vriend: Beginning college, the last thing I wanted to do was become a teacher. My parents and older sister are teachers, and I wanted to do something different and exciting. During freshmen year, I did a lot of coaching and teaching, and I thoroughly enjoyed it. Finally, I realized that one day I was going to have to swallow my pride and go where God was calling me. And I'm thankful I did—it is an exciting career choice!

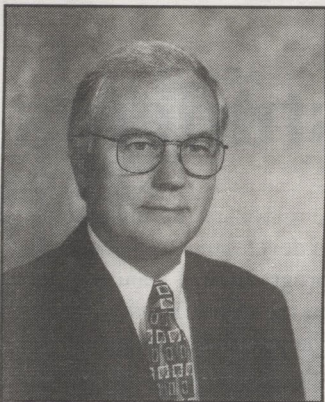
Lisa De Jong: I didn't begin wanting to be a teacher. Actually it is one thing I was sure I didn't want to be.

Kara Plooster: Yes, I have really wanted to be a teacher since I was in first grade. I had a fantastic teacher that year who showed me what it meant to care for and inspire students. That stuck with me.

Kim Kerkstra: I knew that I wanted to teach when I was a senior in high school. I am blessed by being called so early so that I could plan my future in a focused way.

Lisa Oschner: Actually, I applied for all the accounting and business scholarships that I could—and then I went on SWIM (Summer Workshop In Missions) to Atlanta where I taught Bible school for a week. I fell in love with teaching. I have been an education major ever since.

From the president



Dr. Carl E. Zylstra

“Our female and male students both need to see embodied...the variety of ways in which their own gifts can be developed in service to our Lord....”

Using the gifts of everyone

There was a reason why my mother waited until she was twenty-six to get married. It was because she knew that the day she got married was the day she lost her job in the Christian schools where she had been teaching since her eighteenth birthday. I don't know whether it was gender discrimination. Maybe it was just the fact that jobs were so scarce during the Great Depression that no Christian school would pay hard-earned tuition dollars to any family that had two incomes. In any event, that's just the way it was. Men could be married teachers. I suppose widows could be married teachers. Married women lost their jobs.

We've come a long way from the 1930s. Today the Christian community places more emphasis on providing men and women with equal opportunities to exercise equal gifts. And although strong opinions remain regarding the appropriate use of men's and women's gifts within the church, few today would argue that God has provided clear gender-based biblical restrictions on the use of gifts in Christian schools and colleges.

But there are issues that remain, and this issue of the *Voice* profiles some of them. Some may think that Dordt has tried too hard to be egalitarian and not respected sufficiently women's traditional nurturing role in the family—given that almost one third of our full- and part-time faculty and staff are women. Others may think that Dordt College is hopelessly paternalistic—pointing to the

fact that no woman serves as a dean, vice president, or president of the college.

I prefer to think that our institution has made a conscious effort to nurture and respect the diversity of gifts that God has given to the Reformed academic community, women and men alike. And we have to be honest that we still have more to do. Our female and male students both need to see embodied among our faculty and administrators the variety of ways in which their own gifts can be developed in service to our Lord.

But that leads to a rather new and emerging problem. Simply put, young men are no longer coming to college to have their gifts nurtured in the same proportion as are young women. When I came to Dordt College five years ago, our gender ratio was roughly 50/50. Today we enroll fifty-seven percent women and forty-three percent men.

And it's not that Dordt College is unusual. Quite the contrary. Nationally, women make up sixty-one percent of liberal arts colleges and men only thirty-nine percent. Among evangelical Christian colleges the percentage of male students is even lower.

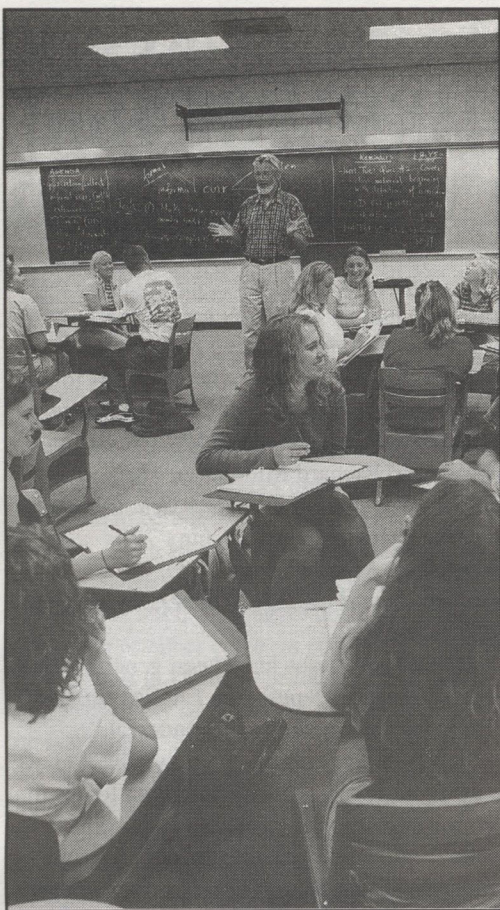
We at Dordt College are committed to developing the gifts of Christian youth, women and men alike. And so we are encouraging young women to develop their gifts and realize that we still have greater steps to take in order to do so more effectively. And we're also encouraging young

men to develop their gifts and are reflecting on ways in which to serve young men of the Christian community in the same proportion as young women.

But we can't do too much until they finally get here. If Christian parents, pastors, youth leaders, and fellow church members don't encourage young men to attend Christian colleges, then in the long run the Christian community will be depriving itself of the developed gifts of its men just as it sometimes deprived itself of the gifts of its women.

My mother had to set her gift of teaching on the shelf seventy years ago in order to fulfill her calling as a wife and mother. But that experience didn't sour her on the value of education. Indeed, she fully expected all her daughters and sons alike to develop their own gifts through as much education as they could possibly obtain.

Today my wife, Gloria, and I have three grandchildren. Two are handsome little boys, and one is a beautiful little girl. All three have great gifts that a proud grandfather can see clearly even now. My prayer and, as college president, my task is this: to take those steps already today that will help ensure that twenty years from now Dordt College will be a place where all three of my grandchildren (and their classmates too) can find the resources and inspiration to fully develop their own gifts for service to their Savior's kingdom.



suggest topics to study so that they take ownership for what they are learning.

Teachers not only need to know specific subjects well; they must also be generalists, says Hoekstra. Dordt's education program gives students a background in both, requiring a broad range of subject area courses to help future middle school teachers acquire the depth of knowledge they need to offer an academically challenging education across the curriculum. In addition to the fourteen general education courses all Dordt students take, education majors with a middle school endorsement take courses in adolescent development and middle school curriculum and instruction as well as adolescent reading, geography, American history, mathematics, and science.

"Dordt has done a good job of training their middle school teachers to understand the middle school student—socially, physically, spiritually, emotionally, and intellectually," says Vriend.

Both Vander Plaats and Hoekstra are enthusiastic about their experiences teaching in middle school. They enjoy the students' spontaneity and motivation, their energy and their

Did you intend to focus on middle school from the beginning?

De Jong: It wasn't until I started dealing with middle school students that I realized how much I liked that age group. The more I deal with them in student teaching, the more I realize I made the right choice.

Plooster: No, I always planned to be an elementary teacher. But I also loved social studies and so middle school was a wonderful combination of the two.

Kerkstra: No, I am in secondary education, and it wasn't until the end of my sophomore year that I began to consider the endorsement. In hindsight, the endorsement is an excellent thing for a resume and makes me more marketable as a teacher. Yet, I believe that whoever adds it should feel a desire to teach middle school students.

Oschner: For a while I was unsure about where I wanted to be. I tried helping out in a preschool Sunday school class, but I realized that was not for me. I enjoyed my little sister and her friends who were in sixth grade, so I volunteered with an after-school tutoring program. That inspired me to teach in the middle grades.

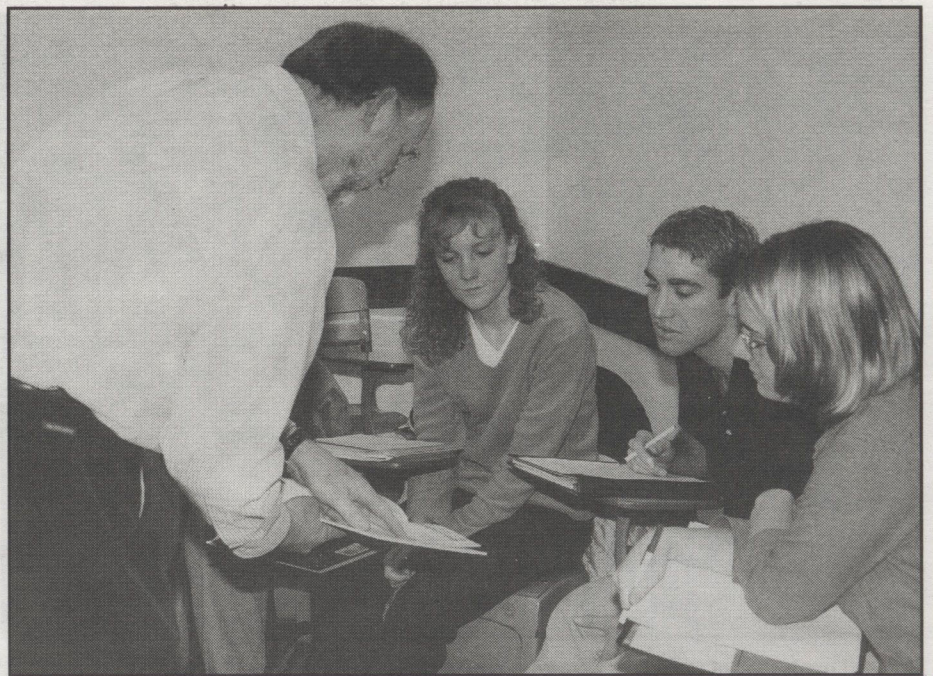
genuineness—all of which outweigh the challenges of dealing with developmental changes.

That enthusiasm has spilled over to students. Last year, Dordt had its first student graduate with this endorsement; this year eight will graduate with a middle school endorsement, and many more are currently in the program.

"Most students come to teaching wanting to teach elementary school because they love young children or wanting to teach high school because they love a specific discipline. Relatively few come into education programs wanting to teach middle school. Too often teachers end up in middle school because they couldn't find a job in elementary or high school," says Vander Plaats. That can give them a negative attitude, but it can also mean that teachers are not really prepared to teach in the middle school. Once students understand the need for excellent teachers in those grades, however, many decide to focus on that level.

Karen Netz, a senior from Pella, Iowa, says, "I was strictly elementary. But after Dr. Vander Plaats talked to our class about the need for middle school teachers, I became more interested. My experiences in the schools have confirmed my decision to seek the middle school endorsement. The more I'm around middle school students, the more I enjoy them; the more I'm around elementary students, the more I'm reminded that I have gifts that better suit teaching upper grades."

Vander Plaats knows that not all of the many students currently seeking the middle school endorsement will find positions in middle schools rather than in traditional junior highs. In general, he says, Christian schools have been slower to adopt the middle school model than most state schools. He



Middle school teachers are often outnumbered by elementary teachers in education majors. Dr. Dennis Vander Plaats has helped increase the number of those choosing middle school level at Dordt.

cites several reasons why this might be the case. In general, Christian school teachers are already overworked. Committing to change means adding work. Also, Christian school students generally perform well on standardized achievement tests, often at or above the ninetieth percentile.

"It's hard to get people excited about a vision for what could be when they are satisfied with what they have," says Vander Plaats.

Regardless of whether their students teach in a middle school or a junior high, Vander Plaats and Hoekstra hope their students will be innovative teachers who will provide a challenging but developmentally responsive education for their mid-level students.

What draws you to the middle school age child?

Netz: They are able to think in more mature ways, carry on conversations, and add insight to discussions. They are also more independent, and I can focus on teaching instead of mothering. I am also drawn to middle school children because they are experiencing so many changes in their lives! They need people who are willing to care about them as people as well as care about their academic development. Middle school students will either love you or hate you, but as teachers we have the ability to dramatically impact these students.

Kerkstra: The energy of the students and the challenge draws me to middle school.

It will definitely be a challenge to help middle school children rise to a higher level of thinking, to help them make the transition from concrete to abstract learning.

Oschner: What draws me the most to middle school is the fact that when I was in middle school I did not have a very good time. I was able to make it through so I want to be able to help others. I also had a really great teacher in seventh grade that made all the difference. That has been an inspiration to me.

Another thing that draws me to middle schoolers is their sense of humor and their intelligence and their desire to find out the answers to all their questions. I am always learning something new from them.

“
Teachers not
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The fall production of *Oklahoma* received several awards at this year's ACTF festival.

Theater department wins ACTF awards

“It gives students an opportunity to connect to other students working in theater and see what other schools are doing.”

The Dordt theater department earned several awards at the regional American College Theater Festival held in Kansas City in January. Jim Van Ry, the department's new technical director, won a meritorious achievement award for his lighting design for the fall production of *Oklahoma*. Conductor Norm Gaines earned the same recognition for orchestra excellence in *Oklahoma*, and students Eric Van Wyk and Michael Contant earned awards for lighting technology.

“This is the first award we've received for lighting design,” says Professor Simon du Toit, chair of the department. In the past few years Dordt has also won awards for set designs and costumes.

Du Toit gives the credit for this year's lighting awards to Van Ry, who joined the department last fall. Before he came to Dordt, Van Ry spent many summers working at the Creede Summer Festival in Colorado, taking courses in theater technology while serving as a high school teacher.

Van Ry's professional experience and creativity—along with a lot of hard work—earned him the achievement award. Dordt has been without a tech professional on staff for two years, and du Toit admits that his experience in acting doesn't translate automatically to the technical aspects of lighting and set building. He's grateful for Van Ry's contribution to the department.

“There's a lot of mathematics and electrical know-how involved,” he says. “Van Ry did it creatively and well.”

The Dordt theater department has been actively involved in the ACTF for many years. Each year the department submits at least one main stage production for judging by the ACTF, giving students the opportunity to prepare for and compete in a national context. Although the main stage show was not selected for presentation at the festival, seven Dordt actors were nominated and invited to compete in the annual Irene Ryan Acting Competition that is part of the festival.

“It gives students an opportunity to connect to other students working in theater and see what other schools are doing,” says du Toit. It also presents an added challenge for them to work to their fullest potential. And, du Toit believes, it sometimes allows Dordt theater people to be a salt and light to those around them, either in behavior or in what they present.

For the second year in a row, Jason Vande Brake reached the finals of the Irene Ryan competition, marking the third time in the nine years that du Toit has been in the department that a Dordt student has reached the finals. Having such talented students to work with makes the department's work enjoyable.

New faculty members get their own orientation

Sally Jongsma

First year students aren't the only ones who go through “freshman” orientation.

First year faculty do too. But unlike student orientation, which happens mostly before the school year starts, faculty orientation is spread over two semesters.

Its goal is to bring new faculty together to get to know each other, to become acquainted with Dordt's history, to discuss its reformational vision, and to share pedagogical tools that current faculty find helpful in their classrooms, says Dr. Charles Adams, dean of the natural sciences.

“Dordt has always been very particular about ensuring that the college continues to move in the direction of its original vision,” says Adams, who is a co-leader of the sessions. He and Dr. Jasper Lesage, dean of the social sciences, plan the year-long program and lead the monthly discussion sessions.

“We're at a point in our history where we hire significant numbers of new faculty every year because of growth and because many original faculty members are retiring,” Adams says. Although each new faculty member agrees to Dordt's mission and statement of purpose, people come from a variety of backgrounds and training. Adams believes it is good for them to think together about how their Christian perspective comes to expression in their understanding of their field, in their teaching, in their scholarly interactions with each other, and in relation to Dordt's statement of purpose.

“We've done lots of things informally to orient new faculty in the past,” says Lesage, “but we want to be more systematic about it to help us maintain our identity as an institution. And it gives new faculty an opportunity to struggle together professionally over common issues, questions, and concerns.” New faculty are given a one-course-reduced load, in part so they have time for such discussions.

So far this year the group has met four times with a different topic and book to read each time. They've heard presentations on Dordt's history, traditions, and vision for Christian education; the general education

program and its rationale; how professors teach out of their Christian perspective; pedagogical issues; and what it means to do Christian scholarship. They've read, among other things, *Transforming Vision* by Brian Walsh and Richard Middleton, *The Outrageous Idea of Christian Scholarship* by George Marsden, and *Teaching Tips: Strategies, Research, and Theory for University and College Teachers* by Wilbert J. McKeachie.

Faculty responses have been generally positive. Dr. Mary Dengler, an English professor, describes the sessions as “wonderful.”

“It's been very satisfying to be able to have a different level of conversation on topics that are important to all of us,” she says. She believes it has helped most people see and understand that Dordt is very serious about its Reformed tradition. “Everyone is so busy, it's hard to keep up with anything not needed for class, so it's good to be nicely forced to get together.”

Dr. Tony Jelsma, a biology professor, has taught for several years in a setting that he says emphasized the relationship of faith and academics. While the Dordt sessions were enjoyable and valuable, they didn't change his thinking a great deal, he says. “But I appreciate the seriousness with which Dordt treats the training of new faculty, not just in their academics, but in integrating their discipline with their faith.” Most helpful to him was the discussion on different learning and teaching styles. “Experienced profs, too, might be in a rut and could use some more effective teaching styles,” he says.

Dr. Ethan Brue, new to the engineering department, says he appreciates wrestling together with other faculty on what it means to be distinctly Reformed, but at this stage in his teaching career he believes the most valuable aspect of the group is the encouragement it provides.

“As new teachers share frustrations and experiences with one another, we realize that we are not the only ones facing these challenges,” he says. “As seasoned professors share their experiences, it is encouraging to know that they have struggled and continue to wrestle with many of the issues we are dealing with in the classroom.”

Campus capsules

Music department brings variety of performers to campus

Dordt's music department keeps the college calendar full. Not only do Dordt musicians perform regularly, but during February and March students had several opportunities to hear and talk to visiting musicians as well. The Bel Canto Children's Choir of Omaha, Nebraska, a group that has toured around the world, performed on February 23.

On February 26 and 27, composer Jean Berger, who is ninety-one, led vocal and choral workshops for Dordt students. Both individual students and Dordt choirs performed his works at an evening concert. Berger has composed theater works, song cycles, solo compositions, and choral pieces throughout his long career.

Composer Michael Burkhardt led a hymn festival on campus on March 9 in which audience and choirs sang his original and arranged hymns. The highlight of the festival was a Dordt-commissioned work by Burkhardt for choirs, brass, strings, and organ based on Psalm 145.

Although the March 23 appearance of the Des Moines Opera was primarily for local elementary school students, music students also benefitted from the opportunity to hear and interact with professional musicians.

Student article published

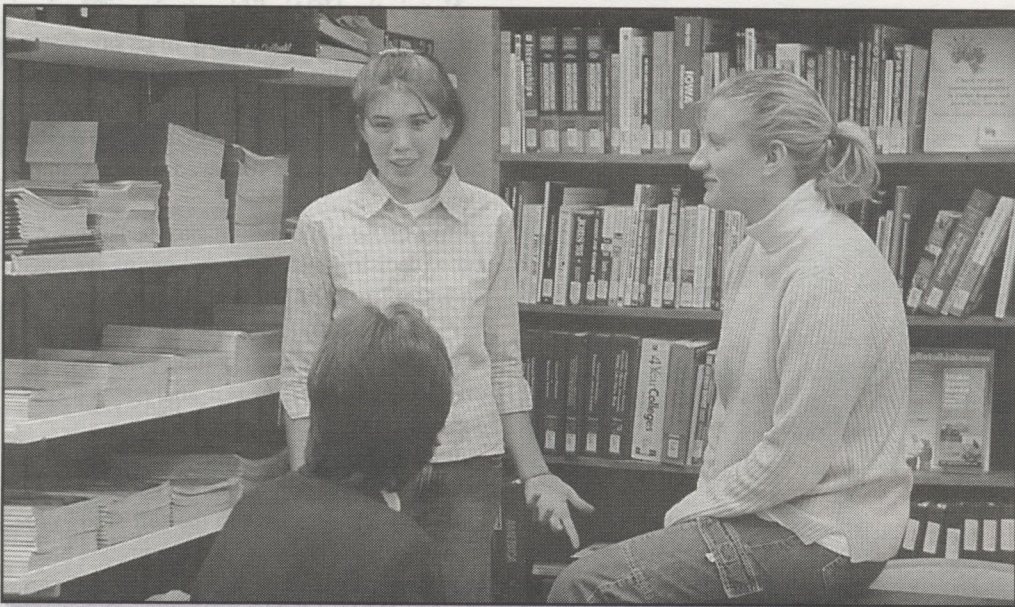
Senior chemistry major Cheryl Vos had an article published in the January 2001 issue of the refereed chemistry journal *Analytical Sciences*. The article, titled “Violet Diode Laser for Metal Ion Determination by Capillary Electrophoresis -

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Nicole Vos and Darcy Beltman were encouraged by responses to the first meeting of WISE.

Women in sciences get support

The new Women in Science and Engineering (WISE) club had its first official meeting in February, hosting a panel discussion that included Dr. Mary Tanyel, a medical doctor in Sioux Center; Dr. Sherri Lantinga, a Dordt professor of psychology; and Rachel Marienau, an engineer at Pella Corporation.

The goal of the meeting was to help women students think through issues related to balancing a professional career and family responsibilities, says Nicole Vos, a sophomore engineering major who along with computer science major Darcy Beltman is heading the group. The topic for the panel was settled upon after asking the nearly thirty women students who expressed interest in the club what they wished to discuss.

The thirty women are majoring in a variety of fields in the sciences. Vos says that one of the group's goals is to provide support for women in majors that have particularly low enrollments of women. Until this year, Vos was the only woman engineering major. Women in computer science and physics are also few.

"I've gotten used to being in classes with all guys," says Vos. "I just don't think about it a lot. That's just the way it is." But she admits that she notices it more this year as the percentage of engineering courses she takes increases.

Vos says she was excited this fall when another woman transferred into the program—even though she is taking a class in which Vos is a teaching assistant, not a student.

Although Vos is unsure of her specific career goals at this point, she wants to help WISE become a part of campus life, a place

where women who find themselves surrounded primarily by male students can come for support from other women.

She credits club sponsor Jo Faber with being the instigator for the group. Following a conference on women in science a couple of years ago, Faber and education professor Barb Hoekstra tried to think of ways to encourage and support women in the sciences. They talked to Vos and Beltman, who were interested in helping form a club.

"Women students often take their studies so seriously that if they don't absolutely excel they think they might not make it in the profession," says Faber. She says there's often a different dynamic at work: "A woman can get a 92 and think she's in trouble; a man can get an 80 and think he's doing fine." Faber hopes that WISE will help women encourage each other.

The women in WISE also received a grant from the Association of Mechanical Engineers this year to begin a mentoring program in local high schools. The Dordt women hope to talk with high school students in these schools to encourage them to follow their interest in the sciences.

"We're just getting started, but it's very exciting," says Vos. She and others appreciate the support they're getting from faculty in the natural science division. The natural science dean offered to pay for club refreshments, and engineering professors not only have been strong supporters, but helped the club apply for the grant. Other faculty in the science building send notices of possible speakers for the club's meetings.

"They are behind us all the way," says Faber.

Calling all Dordt writers

Arete is Dordt's newest publication, and anyone who is part of the Dordt community is invited to submit pieces for publication. The brainchild of Dr. James C. Schaap, *Arete* is published exclusively online. The first issue is posted, ready to read, and includes pieces by students, alumni, and faculty.

Arete harks back to Schaap's days as a Dordt student. He still has a copy of a 1970 issue of *Arete*, a campus literary magazine—maybe the precursor to today's *Canon*. Schaap admits in his introduction to the new publication that he's not even sure exactly what the title refers to, but he likes the idea of connecting to the past as well as serving the present.

"We often talk about the fact that we'd like to keep in better touch with our English graduates," says Schaap. "This looked like an interesting way to do that." It also keeps English and other alums aware of what others are writing and thinking about, he adds.

"We like to think we teach writing well. This could be a way to continue the conversation with alums and keep them involved."

Schaap would like to see *Arete* include mainly pieces that are imaginative—although he'll include an academic essay occasionally too, he says.

"Literary magazines don't do well," he says. So *Arete* must create a conversation that includes topics that graduates can relate to. He envisions imaginative and playful descriptive pieces, reflective essays, poems, stories, and some academic papers that allow students and alums to continue to use their writing gifts.

"It will succeed when Dordt graduates and community think of it as a place to connect," he says.

Although the publication is under the auspices of the English department, Schaap is serving as its editor, publisher, and promoter at the moment. He urges alums to consider sending him their submissions. He has already received some submissions for the next issue of *Arete*, but would like to receive more from which to select a variety of pieces for publication. He is excited about helping make student, alumni, and faculty writing available to others and will publish as often as he has new work to put online. You can find *Arete* at www.dordt.edu/onlpub/arete.

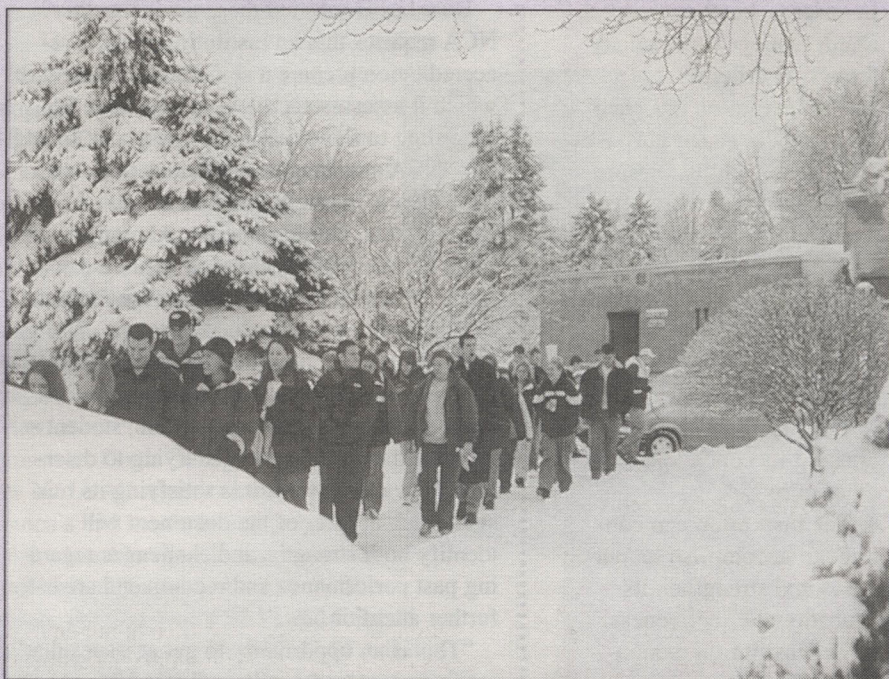
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<small>In an essay scheduled for publication in the <i>Bismarck Tribune</i> later this year, Dordt College sophomore Heidi Karges, from rural Stanton, North Dakota, looks across the wide prairie to land a surrounding her family's ranch and sees nothing less than beauty. Read it first here.</small>			
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<small>While spending a summer on a farm near Chisago, Minnesota, senior Ryan Klingens fell in love with the Gallatin Valley. In a reflective portrait of the region, he comes to realize the valley's own sheer beauty may be, early enough, its own undoing.</small>			
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<small>Visions of Christ—speaking in tongues—religious ecstasy. Christians, especially Catholics, often have a hard time knowing how to relate to "mystical" spirituality. In this and other essays, recent grad Cara Medema explores the nature of religious passion as described in Ron Hansen's 1991 novel and bestseller <i>Mariette in Ecstasy</i> and the works of two medieval mystics.</small>			
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“

It will succeed when Dordt graduates and community think of it as a place to connect.

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It's been a long winter



Winter closed in on campus this year, as snowbanks and ice buildups kept growing each week. But it was often beautiful.

Laser Induced Fluorescence” and co-authored by Jeremy E. Melanson and Dr. Charles A. Lucy, grew out of research Vos did as part of an undergraduate summer scholarship program in Canada organized by the National Science and Engineering Research Council (NSERC). Vos held a research position at the University of Alberta in Dr. Lucy's chemistry lab.

Dordt hosts its last Staley lecturer

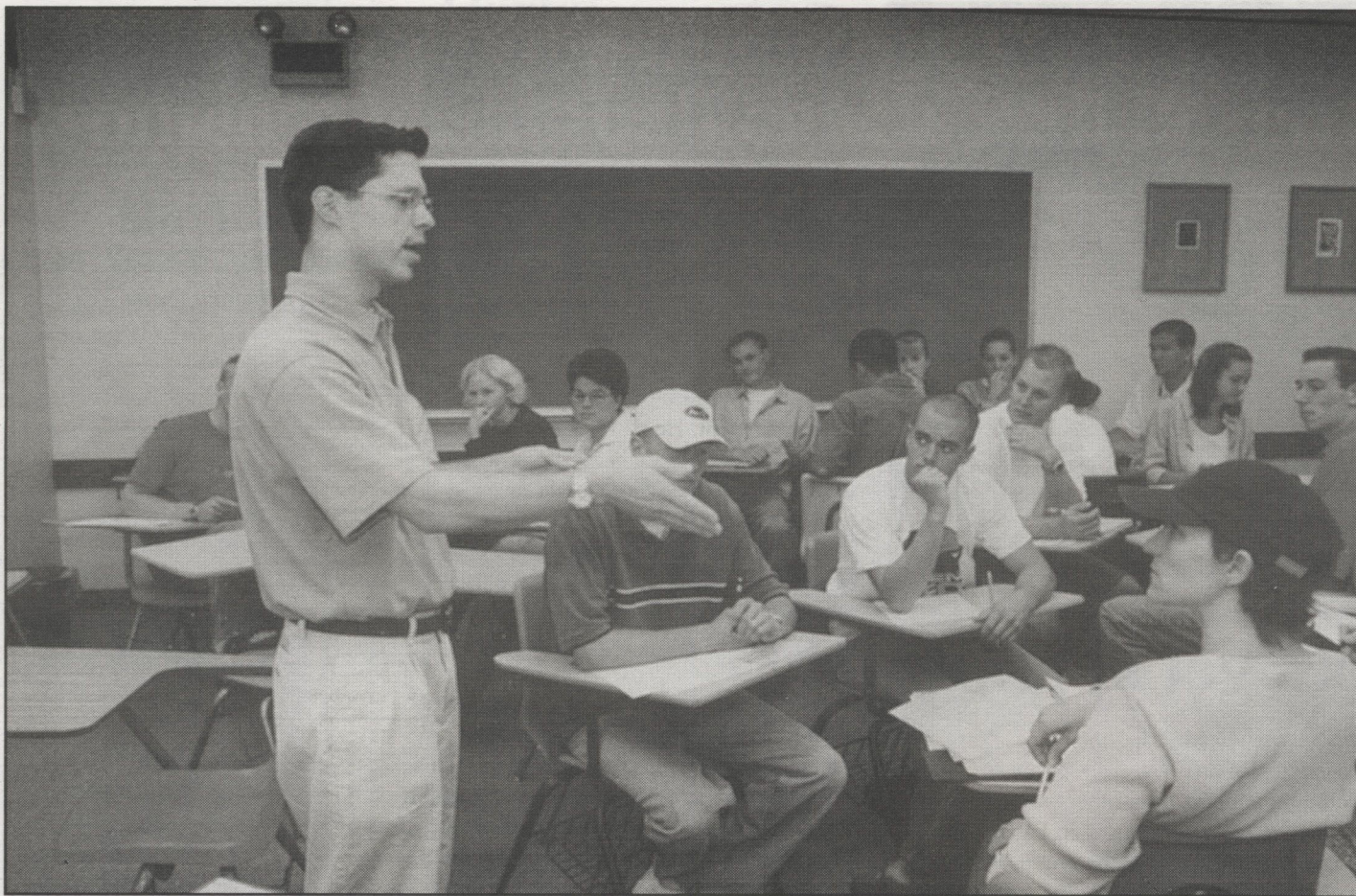
Dr. Adrienne Dengerink Chaplin, senior member in philosophical aesthetics at the Institute for Christian Studies in Toronto, was the final Staley Foundation lecturer to visit Dordt's campus. Chaplin gave two lectures, “Beyond Words: The Voice of Art in a Deafening World” and “Fascination or Sensation: Post Modern Art and the Shock

of the Old.” She also spoke to the college community in chapel on the topic “Waiting in Pain: The Art of Redemptive Longing.”

The Staley Foundation, which has funded guest lecturers to campuses for decades, has discontinued funding for its lecture program.

Construction progresses

In spite of the early onset of winter, construction on the Campus Center continued on pace through recent months. Last month steel girders were erected and now the shape of the building is becoming evident. Most of the shell should be in place within two months—perhaps in time for graduation. The architect is currently working with administrators on sub-contracting the electrical and plumbing for the building. You can keep an eye on progress by logging on to the website: www.dordt.edu/services/campus_center/.



Re-accreditation helps college assess how well it is doing

Photos on these pages give a look into classrooms on campus.

Cara Miedema DeHaan

Two sides of a coin. That's how Rockne McCarthy would describe the two goals that will guide much of the hubbub on campus the rest of this year.

To be an accredited postsecondary institution, Dordt College must participate every ten years in a re-accreditation process—the first side of the coin—with the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools (NCA). This two-and-a-half-year process will culminate in a site visit by NCA representatives on October 29-31, 2001. Preparation for this visit has involved—and continues to involve—every administrative office on campus, as well as students and constituents in the broader Dordt community.

As an institution guided by Abraham Kuyper's expression "To be Reformed is to be reforming," Dordt is committed to discovering new and better ways to translate a Reformed, biblically-based educational philosophy into sound educational practice. This is the second side: the college is always looking for ways to improve, to translate what is said in its foundational documents into more faithful action.

How has Dordt tied these goals together? NCA requires that an institution seeking re-accreditation prepare a self-study document in which it assesses each aspect of college life, according to five criteria (see side bar). In addition, NCA encourages institutions to structure their reports in a way that will be most beneficial for them. Dordt's steering committee, set up in February 1999, chose to explore the theme "Cultivating Lives of Service," which summarizes the institutional mission.

Unlike the last report completed in 1991, the 2001 document takes a more analytical look at three broad areas—academic affairs, student services, and external relations—trying to determine how closely Dordt is satisfying its mission. Each chapter of the document will identify both strengths and challenges regarding past performance and recommend areas for further attention.

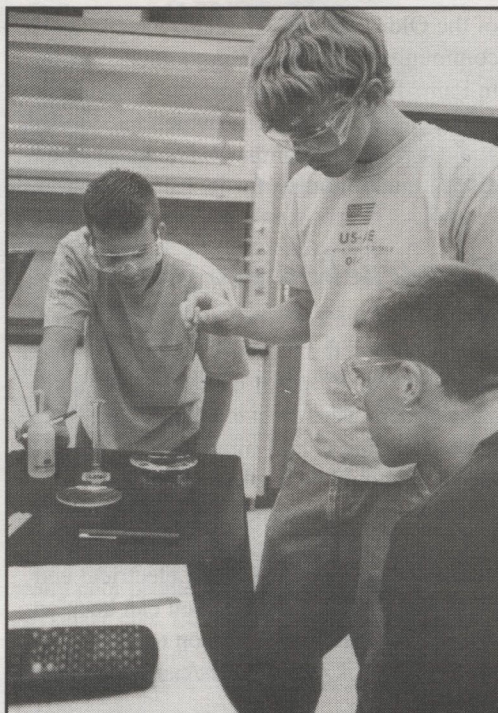
"This is an opportunity to get at issues that are important to the college," said Vice President of Academic Affairs Rockne

McCarthy, who chairs the steering committee.

President Carl Zylstra, who is officially responsible to NCA for the re-accreditation process, supports the thematic perspective of the document. "This structure is going to serve us well," he said, "because we won't get bogged down with the details. It's a creative way to keep us mission-focused as we look at our performance in the past."

In contrast to the 1991 report, the present study puts a greater focus on assessment. McCarthy explained that rather than focusing primarily on institutional resources (such as the number of professors or library books), NCA has become more interested in effectiveness; it wants to see that institutions have policies in place to assess student learning and to examine their academic programs and activities.

"We have a nationally recognized assessment program," said Curtis Taylor, who is director of planning and special assistant to the president, and who has been working closely with McCarthy in the NCA process. He added that professors Jasper Lesage and Ken Bussema, who head up the assessment effort, have given presentations on Dordt's assessment program at NCA conferences.



New is the NCA's fifth criterion: "The institution demonstrates integrity in its practices and relationships." The committee has chosen to deal with this criterion in a chapter on institutional decision-making, focusing on the decision-making process followed for the Campus Center.

"We chose to do this chapter because we know decision-making is something we must do better," said McCarthy. "We're going beyond formal statements on decision-making to evaluate how we are putting principles into practice. This depth of self-analysis is a sign of a mature institution."

Perhaps related to this issue of decision-making, the steering committee is making an effort to include many people in the self-study process. Until this semester the committee has been doing most of its work behind the scenes. Now the self-study draft is being offered to the college community for feedback. In January staff and faculty were given an opportunity to read and respond to the document in a series of campus-wide meetings.

Carl Fictorie, who teaches in the chemistry department, read the self-study closely and attended the meetings. He found the document interesting and educational; he learned more about how the different aspects of the organizational structure work. Fictorie was encouraged by the committee's request for feedback.

"The committee was certainly receptive to our comments," he said. "What remains to be seen is whether our comments will be incorporated into the document."

Hubert Krygsman, history professor, also attended the meetings. Although he believes that the document represents Dordt accurately enough to outsiders, he questioned its real value on campus.

"I don't see the document doing very well at addressing live, internal issues," he said, although he admitted that one issue did raise significant response, namely, the way the self-study defined the relationship between student services and academic affairs and the nature of education in each sphere. Taylor and McCarthy agree that this is a big issue.

"The Educational Task of Dordt College states that we all—in our different offices—are contributing as educators to the mission of Dordt College," McCarthy explained. "The challenge of the institution is to fully embody this ideal—to make our rhetoric norm what we do."

"We have to recognize that student learning doesn't only happen in the classroom," echoed Taylor. "Academic affairs and student services have significant overlap. The document reflects this understanding and has catapulted us into a discussion that may be painful but is definitely healthy."

Despite Taylor's optimism, both McCarthy and Taylor have learned that the North Central process can't carry the burden of discussion on important issues such as this.

"I've learned that the North Central process alone can't accomplish what we want to do," McCarthy said. Thus, the academic office will co-sponsor an August workshop with student services, a workshop that will engage both faculty and student services staff in a discussion about how they can work together toward the educational mission of Dordt College. The results of this discussion will be presented to the board of trustees in October.

Besides requesting feedback from college employees, the steering committee has invited students to comment on the self-study document. Based on nominations from faculty, staff, and Student Forum members, Taylor personally asked three sets of students to read one third of the document. This personalized format was recommended by Gerbrich Miedema and Aaron Koning, Student Forum representatives on the steering committee.

"It was a good, structured way for the committee to get quality feedback. If it had

“We’re going further than what North Central is expecting.”

The five NCA criteria

In order to be re-accredited, Dordt College must satisfy these five criteria:

1. The institution has clear and publicly stated purposes consistent with its mission and appropriate to an institution of higher education.
2. The institution has effectively organized the human, financial, and physical resources necessary to accomplish its purposes.
3. The institution is accomplishing its educational and other purposes.
4. The institution can continue to accomplish its purposes and strengthen its educational effectiveness.
5. The institution demonstrates integrity in its practices and relationships.

been done any other way it wouldn't have been as successful," said Miedema, who participated in the student services discussion over dinner. "I just wish the student meetings could have been done sooner, so that students could have had an earlier influence on the document."

Taylor said, "What I hope it will prove is that the personal contact will be effective. We're hoping that students will be glad to hear, 'We value your opinion; will you tell us what it is?'"

The last leg of community feedback requires that the public be notified through advertisements that Dordt is undergoing re-accreditation. The public will be invited to comment on the institution of Dordt College.

Some members of the Dordt community have expressed concern over whether the self-study is a report that must be agreed upon by all or a snapshot taken by various people that initiates dialogue. Taylor said that it should be considered the latter.

"This is a committee report. We don't expect everyone to agree," McCarthy said, adding that the key to a successful process is that it be participatory, that people be given opportunity to provide feedback. The report's recommendations will not suddenly become new college policy.

On the other hand, Dordt's Institutional Planning Committee, which looks ahead to the future of the institution, will review the study as they discuss future planning needs.

Zylstra commented, "The kinds of things we're saying in this document—identifying current goals and assessing how we're doing—could serve as chapter one of a strategic plan for the future." He continued, "Big strategic plans are not in vogue, because the environment is changing so fast, but the Institutional Planning Committee will be laying out the next steps we need to take as an institution, leading up to our Jubilee year and further, asking what we will need to accomplish our mission."

The draft of the self-study document, currently over 200 pages, is a collaboration by many writers. Taylor will be responsible for pulling the report together into a coherent whole. One of his tasks is to make sure that the theme of "cultivating lives of service" runs through the document.

"There are some areas where the theme is most tangible, such as in academics and student services: academic programs light a fire in students, who carry it out in academic and co-curricular programs," Taylor said. "But the theme's no less important in other areas. I'm glad there's not a real pietistic concept of service coming through in the document. On the other hand, in some cases we have to say the obvious so that it's clear to others."

The NCA re-accreditation process has called for a huge investment in time and energy. "The process is probably as useful as you make it," Fictorie said. "If you're doing it to get NCA off your back, it's a waste of time. But if you're using it to plan for the future or look back at past plans, it is helpful."

The kinds of things we're saying in this document—identifying current goals and assessing how we're doing—could serve as chapter one of a strategic plan for the future.



First youth ministry majors get experience at local churches

Cara Miedema DeHaan

During their years at Dordt, most students retain membership at their home churches, but that doesn't stop them from getting involved with area congregations. Students fill many roles in these churches: Sunday school teachers and youth group leaders, GEMS and Cadet counselors, greeters and ushers, organists and pianists, sound technicians, juice and coffee servers, choir and praise team members, readers, and drama participants.

Most students who get involved in a church do so to serve the congregation and to further their gifts and interests, but youth ministry theology majors have an added motivation: their major requires them to work as youth workers in a church setting for at least two semesters.

Senior Ryan Link has been interning at Covenant CRC since the second semester of his junior year, teaching catechism and helping to lead the youth group. His primary responsibility is to meet with a teen leader to prepare monthly Bible lessons, but he also helps to provide vision and guidance within the leadership team.

Steve Blom, who grew up in Sioux Center, is doing his practicum in his home congregation, Faith CRC. He says that his internship has come at a time when the council is considering adding a youth pastor position. His work in youth ministry has helped them clarify the role a youth pastor could play in their youth programs. Blom has learned about working in the church body and has gained new appreciation for the "love, encouragement, and prayers" that his congregation promises to infants at their baptism.

"No matter how stable a high school student is, it seems like they're all going through a crisis of sorts," Blom said. "We need to be there for them—we promised that at baptism. Especially if it's not happening at home, we want it to happen at youth group." He added,

"A huge benefit of having a trained youth pastor is having someone parents can talk to and ask questions of if they can't understand their teen."

Students doing the youth ministry practicum are required to write journals and meet regularly with Professor Syd Hielema, who served for several years as a youth pastor before coming to teach theology at Dordt. The interns look to Hielema as a mentor.

Blom explained, "Syd has been there and is wise when it comes to these things. When I face a problem, I talk to him about it, and together we try to fix it."

Agreeing with Blom, Link offered some examples. "Lately, in my catechism classes, the kids have been asking questions I can't answer, like about specific Bible texts regarding a certain issue. So I ask Hielema, and he helps me find the answers. Also, as a leader I tend to fade into the background, and Hielema's taught me to stick my nose out sometimes. He offers encouragement and constructive criticism." Link hopes to maintain contact with Hielema next year while getting settled in his own youth ministry position.

Blom and Link belong to the first group of Dordt graduates looking for youth ministry positions. The youth ministry emphasis within Dordt's theology major was initiated only three years ago, largely in response to a tremendous need within the Christian Reformed Church, says Hielema, who happens to chair the Christian Reformed youth ministry committee. Reformed colleges and seminaries train youth pastors in very different ways, and are currently meeting from time to time to see if any type of standardization is possible, Hielema says. Thus, although this is the first year Dordt has youth ministry graduates, these students are in high demand. One student, junior Rob Vande Lune, has already been hired as the youth director for the Presbyterian Church in Le Mars where he has been interning.

Hielema stressed that the church internships are "absolutely essential to the youth ministry program." He added, "There's a lot of mutual learning going on. The other youth group leaders are very happy to work with students who have made this the focus of their education. And the students are finding that they are working with a lot of very committed adults, some of whom have done this for a long time."

Blom pointed out that his practicum has confirmed for him his gifts and his decision to go into youth ministry. "I've been given strong leadership skills, and an ability to articulate my faith in a way that youth understand," he said, passionate about the opportunities he has to use these gifts.

Link said, "If I hadn't had my practicum, I would have felt totally unprepared to find a job in youth ministry. It's given me real life experiences to connect with what I learned in the classroom."

It's given me real life experiences to connect with what I learned in the classroom.

Mentoring plays valuable role

Senior Eric Dirksen is another student who has benefitted from Hielema's mentorship in youth ministry. As a pre-seminary student, Dirksen decided to tag on the youth ministry emphasis because it would help him as a pastor. However, after doing a semester practicum as a junior in his home church in Rock Valley, Trinity CRC, he decided to drop the youth ministry emphasis.

"The practicum was very enjoyable and clarifying: I enjoyed working with the youth, but it showed me that my passions lie elsewhere," Dirksen explained. "Conversations with Dr. Hielema helped me clarify that; he was both supportive of my decision for youth ministry yet helped me come to a different conclusion."

Dirksen has had further clarifying conversations with Hielema about his future education. With Hielema's encouragement, Dirksen has decided to pursue not a pastoral degree (M.Div.) but to work toward an academic theological degree. "I've learned that more than anything, I really like academics. I really like the idea of teaching and of continued study for myself," Dirksen said.

Despite the changes in direction, Dirksen continues to be a part of the leadership team of Trinity's youth group, because, as he says, "it's both my way of giving something back to my congregation and doing what I think all people in the congregation should be doing in some way, that is, using their gifts and being an active member."



Women students, like Erika Van Den Hul, speak appreciatively of the role a woman faculty mentor, like Dr. Karen DeMol, plays in their lives.

Finding women faculty is crucial, but challenging

Sally Jongsma

Dordt College has been committed to increasing the number of women on its faculty for some time. And it has.

Twenty years ago five out of sixty-three full-time faculty were women. Today fourteen out of eighty-four full-time faculty are women—still a low percentage when considering that more than half of Dordt's students are women.

"It is important that we embody the range of gifts in our faculty that are found in the Christian community," says Dr. Carl Zylstra. He believes that Dordt needs to encourage and inspire all students to develop their gifts—whether they are men or women. Although Dordt, like others in society today, is also asking whether its male students are being well served by current practices and programs, Zylstra and the faculty agree that if women are to be encouraged to use their gifts as teachers and leaders in our institutions and communities, Dordt must provide them with not only the tools but also models.

"It's absolutely critical," says Dr. Rockne McCarthy, vice president for academic affairs. In fact, as a result of work that has gone into the North Central self-study report, there is a recommendation to include gender as one of the criteria for hiring new faculty.

McCarthy is aware that this is a controversial issue. Gender is not more important than Reformed perspective, for example, but it must be taken into account in the hiring process, he says. "If the institution believes it should have more women on faculty, it needs to find ways to see that it happens," he believes.

Dr. Jasper Lesage, dean of the social sciences, also would like to see the number of women faculty increase. He agrees that women students need good role models—but he also thinks that having more women on faculty adds something to the life of the institution. While he is hesitant to generalize about all men faculty or all women faculty, he nevertheless says that women professors tend to be more sensitive to people's feelings than their male colleagues.

Even as he says it he thinks of exceptions to the statement—but he still believes he's right. If

he is, it makes a difference in the kind of environment both students and faculty are part of on campus.

"We're learning from our assessment results with students that environment is more important for how they learn than we think," he says. One could ask whether having women in a significant minority on faculty affects how they work and give leadership.

That is not to say that women at Dordt do not give good leadership. The current chair of the faculty, Dr. Karen DeMol, a music professor, is respected by faculty and administration for her leadership. Like DeMol, last year's board president, lawyer and alum Gail Jansen, had the respect of the entire campus community.

Dr. Pam Adams, who teaches in the education department, says that the confrontational nature of many faculty discussions discourages some women from entering into discussions and having a voice. Art Professors Susan Van Geest and Jo Alberda also talk about voice. Van Geest says men's louder, more dominating voices—sometimes with a tendency to interrupt—don't lend themselves to the more conversant style of dialogue that many women feel more comfortable with. Alberda adds that in faculty meetings and classrooms, women have to work harder to make their voices sound authoritative. "When some of us try to speak more loudly to be heard, we sound screechy rather than impressive," she says.

At the same time, Dr. Mary Dengler, professor of English, points out that many of the challenges facing women faculty are much the same as those facing men—finding time to prepare, evaluate papers, spend time with students, keep up with changes in the field, do research, write papers, attend conferences, participate in seminars, and enjoy the arts and recreation.

"Perhaps home and family demands add pressure—though certainly men must also shop, cook, run the home, pay the bills, take care of income tax, the car, etc.—they do, don't they?" she asks. "Women don't have the pressures of proving themselves as women in a man's world the way my aunt, a physician, and my great-aunt, a professional artist, did." And Dengler says she has found her male colleagues at Dordt to be free of stereotypes.

Dr. Sherri Lantinga was quite happy when she came to Dordt that she would be working with men in her department. "Women are often

more competitive," she says. "Another woman once told me that lone women faculty think of themselves as 'queens' and don't want that role upset by an incoming princess." She appreciates the more straightforward way in which she thinks men often deal with issues. "Besides, now I can be 'queen,'" she adds with a chuckle.

She is, however, very grateful for women colleagues—even if there aren't as many as she might hope for. Women can provide other women with a more supportive setting on a personal and professional level than men can for women colleagues, she says.

All of the women faculty agree. "Having women colleagues and women faculty is helpful emotionally and professionally, since women use a different language than men—usually suggesting instead of telling, listening as much as talking," Dengler says. And having women colleagues allows women to fraternize with each other at length without causing gossip and to travel to conferences together—something men take for granted.

But, the real point that women on Dordt's faculty emphasize is that men and women bring different strengths and perspectives to the educational process. A predominance of one gender in an area can foster stereotypes, Lantinga says. "If you see all men in a room or in a department you begin not only to think that only men are interested in that area, but maybe that only men should be interested." It gives a subtle or not-so-subtle message to women who may have gifts in an area, Lantinga says, and, more importantly, it doesn't encourage women to develop the gifts God has given them.

Dordt's women faculty are committed to doing all they can to encourage their students—and maybe especially their women students—not only to develop their gifts but to continue their studies and maybe help create a better balance of women faculty at places like Dordt College.

"I encourage all of my gifted students to continue study at the graduate level," says Dr. Joan Ringerwole. But she finds that women need more encouraging and convincing. The comment made by one student, "I never thought about it. Do you think I'm good enough?" is much more typical of women students than men, Ringerwole says.

Often women are not thinking as far into the future as men are, women faculty say. Some are looking for something to do until they get married and have children.

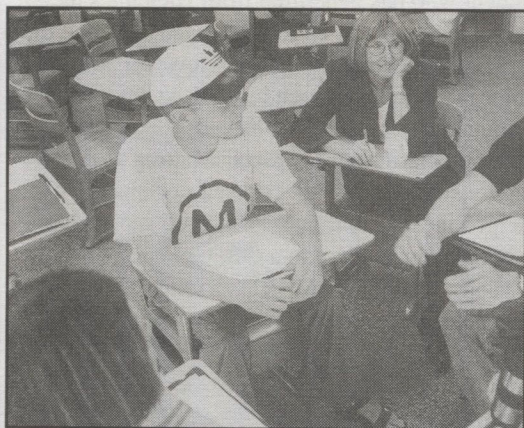
Adams says she often speaks to her students about how she received her bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degree after having a family. "I tell them that they need not limit what they can do professionally because of their desire to have a family. I believe children should come first, but that does not mean the women have to serve only on the homefront," she says.

"We've done a pretty good job of increasing the number of women providing instruction in classrooms," Zylstra says. "We've done less well in increasing the number of full-time women faculty despite the fact that we make a special effort to ensure that applicant pools for interviews include both women and ethnic minorities."

The reasons why the numbers aren't greater are complex. From his experience, Zylstra says, "Women have tended to place their careers behind family responsibilities more than men." Women are often more willing to follow their husbands to a job than husbands are to follow their wives. For a college like Dordt, situated in a smaller community, this is further complicated by the fact that if husbands of potential women faculty are also professionals, they may have a more difficult time finding a job.

"Our surveys show that women students appreciate the encouragement they receive to develop their talents," says Zylstra. He hopes that encouragement translates into a larger pool of women candidates from which Dordt can choose its faculty in future years.

If the institution believes it should have more women on faculty, it needs to find ways to see that it happens.



Full-time faculty include instructors and assistant, associate, and full professors. Many women teach in adjunct positions.

Where are all the women?

Julia K. Stronks

Whenever the *Voice* arrives in my mail, I immediately drop what I am doing, make a cup of tea and sit down to catch up on all the goings-on at Dordt. My husband and I met and married at Dordt. We both consider those college years to have been not only great fun but also formative in terms of helping us to think through and respond to God's call to each of us in both our public and private lives.

However, a few months ago, when I read the Summer 2000 issue of the *Voice*, I was struck by something that troubled me. There was a picture of faculty invited to Dordt from Christian colleges all over the country to talk about the relationship between traditional "Western Civ" courses and global history in the Christian college curriculum. All of the participants were male.

I teach at a Christian college similar to Dordt, and the role our women students play in our communities is always on my mind—so, I was primed to be sensitive to a picture like this. I am disappointed and concerned that in the twenty years since I left college, we are seeing not more and more, but fewer and fewer women emerging as leaders in our Reformed institutions.

There are, of course, women doctors, lawyers, accountants, Coffee Break organizers, and so forth. My point is that, given our demographics, we should have more women leaders at this point. For a long time, women students have outnumbered men at Christian colleges—this year's entering class at Dordt held 137 men and 188 women. Even more importantly, however, women's entering GPA and ACT scores are equal to or higher than those of men. One would expect this pool of talent to produce, at a minimum, a better balance in our faculties, for example. But, it hasn't. In 1982, when I left Dordt, there were three women faculty at the associate or full professor rank. Out of a faculty of sixty-three, that is not quite five percent. Today, twenty years later, there are eighty-two faculty and four are female associate or full professors—still not quite five percent. What's going on?

If you had asked me in 1980 if I was mentored in the same way as male students, I would have answered, emphatically, "yes!" My male profs were very helpful during the law school application process—they encouraged me to go to Washington, D.C. on the American Studies Program; they did everything they could to push a smart, insecure student into the role she wanted but was scared to pursue. When I left college I assumed that because I could go to law school there would be no gender barriers in front of me. I was unprepared for the struggles I would face in balancing career and family. I was also unprepared to think through the assumptions that we make about differences between male and female leadership styles. In the legal world that was problematic. In the evangelical Christian world it was really tough.

Given the synodical debates in the Christian Reformed church about the role of women in church leadership, it is understandable that women are not emerging as leaders in that field. But the debate about why women should not be ministers or elders has a profound rippling effect. When you combine this with the arguments about "headship" that were prevalent in the 70s and 80s, you can see that the different roles men and women play in church and family life have a direct impact on the role they play in other areas of life. If women are not seen as able to provide leadership in family or church life, then it is difficult to see how they can do so in work arenas. I am not going to argue here that there are not significant differences between men and women, but this is an issue that is being hotly debated outside our faith circles. The implications of our assumptions about gender are huge—and, these discussions are not welcome in our church. "Feminism" is terribly suspect—and almost any mention of gender roles gets pushed under the feminist umbrella.

Over the course of the last twenty years, I have come to reject the view that women have an essentially different role to play in life than do men. Although I do not need to be in a community that agrees with my understanding of what it means to be a Christ-centered woman, I do need to be in a community that welcomes discussion about it. So, what can be done?

If changes are to occur in our culture, our teaching institutions are one of the best places to start. Despite my belief that Dordt faculty did mentor me well, I would like to challenge all of us to think through doing this even better.

First, hiring women as faculty is not just a "politically correct" thing to do. Women and men students need to see what it looks like to be a woman professional. Gender equity cannot be theoretical—it has to be modeled. At forty, I can see that the collective messages I received from the Christian community about a woman's role in life were almost powerful enough to tamp down my professors' mentoring. If women students see mostly men lead and mostly women raise children, our mentoring of them will not matter. Women will not know how to lead.

Now, it can be difficult to find women faculty to hire, in part because of the conflicting messages women receive about their real calling. I suggest two things. Gifted women students must be encouraged to do doctoral studies. And, at least until we have more women faculty, colleges should actively search for women scholars and those in other professional fields, inviting them to speak on campus. Often the networks that male academics have formed do not allow them to get to know Christian women scholars. Bringing professional women to campus, both alums and others, will allow for a different type of mentoring to take place. Faculty mentors serve one role, but research shows us that students also benefit tremendously from mentors in their chosen field of work. Male and female students and faculty can network in a mentoring program that reaches out to women professionals.

Second, it is striking to me that the Reformed worldview that claims all of culture can and must be transformed has still such amazing hostility to feminist theory. True, there are elements of many feminist voices that are antithetical to a Christian worldview—but, that's true of every "ism" that we teach. I think that if all of our students and faculty took feminist thought as seriously as we've taken study of liberalism, Marxism and so forth, we would have wonderful discussions about gender roles and the lack of Christian women leaders. And we'd learn something. Feminism, like all perspectives, can contain truth that can inform a Christian worldview.

Finally, I think we need to challenge our assumptions that women should balance family and career while men will easily have both at the same time. A professional career is not for everyone. But, we do seem to assume that a professional career is for every man who wants one and is for only those women who will give up something in family life. Some men stay home with their children, true. And there are women who try frantically to "have it all"—all at the same time. But if we challenged the notion that "career and family" exist differently for men and women, I think we would find that both men and women can benefit from an arrangement that encourages both parties to have equal responsibility in the home and equal responsibility in public life. This means changing the way we look at work. Both male and female students need discussions concerning appropriate parenting and family life, whether or not they will be engaged in professional work. And, when we Christians fail to discuss alternative approaches to career and family choices with our students, we serve neither our potential women leaders nor our men leaders very well.

Plumblines are commentaries written by people from the Dordt community to stimulate thinking about issues facing Christians living in 2001.

“Women and men students need to see what it looks like to be a woman professional. Gender equity cannot be theoretical—it has to be modeled.”



Julia K. Stronks ('82) is an associate professor of political studies at Whitworth College in Spokane, Washington.

DORDT COLLEGE FACULTY POSITIONS

Dordt College is seeking applications for openings beginning 2001-2002 in the following areas:

Communication (Two-year position) - Mass communication; introductory speaking/listening

Education (One or more positions)

Introduction, upper-level (elementary and secondary methods), and possibly graduate levels with emphasis on special education

Foreign Language - Spanish

Psychology - Clinical/Counseling

Social Work (Temporary positions with possibility for regular appointment)

Generalist; micro-practice background; methods courses & field practice

Generalist; macro-practice background; public policy, and/or research

Theatre Arts - Theatre generalist, theatre history emphasis

Theology (One-year position) - General education courses in biblical theology and upper level biblical studies courses

Evaluation of applications will continue until the positions are filled. To learn more about a position and receive application materials, qualified persons committed to a Reformed, biblical perspective and educational philosophy are encouraged to send a letter of interest and a curriculum vitae/resume to:

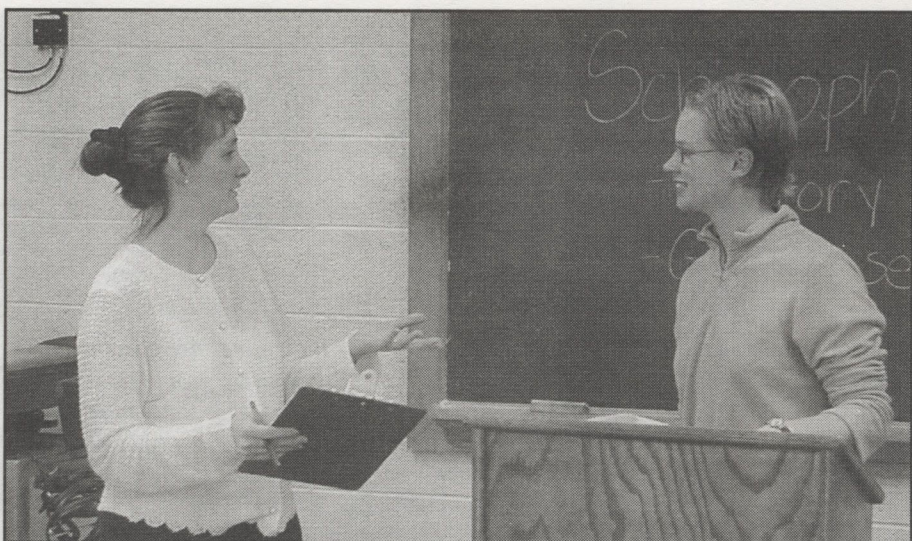
Dr. Rockne McCarthy
Vice President for Academic Affairs
Dordt College
498 4th Avenue NE
Sioux Center, IA 51250-1697

Facsimile: 712 722-4496
E-mail: vpaa@dordt.edu
Web site: www.dordt.edu/offices/acadaff

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Dr. Sherri Lantinga and senior Angela Kroeze Visser gave a well-received presentation on their teaching placement at a conference this spring.

Professor and senior team up for a teaching placement

Sally Jongsma

A senior psychology major had a unique opportunity to explore her career choice last semester. Angela Kroeze Visser assisted and shadowed Dr. Sherri Lantinga, teaching some classes, making and grading assignments, reviewing textbooks, and attending a faculty meeting. The experience confirmed Kroeze Visser's desire to teach college psychology. In the process, she received valuable mentoring and preparation for graduate school.

Kroeze Visser says she's planned to go to graduate school since early in high school. Like most psychology majors, when she entered college she thought she would study clinical psychology and go into counseling. Many courses and a social service agency placement later, she is convinced that clinical work is not what she wants to do. She still

plans to attend graduate school, but now her goal is to prepare for teaching and research.

"I realized after a field experience assignment and a Fundamentals of Practice class that I was really more interested in research and academia," said Kroeze Visser. "I didn't know if I would have the kind of patience I would need to help people on a long-term basis or if I did, whether I would enjoy doing it."

Ironically, her advisor and mentor, Lantinga, went through a nearly identical process, although she didn't have the assistance or encouragement that Kroeze Visser has had.

"I realized in college that counseling was not a good fit for me," Lantinga said. "I didn't know if I'd have the patience to meet with clients week after week." It wasn't until she began working in her college peer tutoring center that she figured out for herself that teaching and writing were her strengths and what she loved doing.

"I love figuring things out and finding ways to explain them to others," she says. Lantinga wanted to give Kroeze Visser all the encouragement she could to explore her goal of teaching in college, especially since colleges like Dordt continue to have a difficult time finding and hiring qualified women faculty who work out of a Reformed perspective.

Field placements are fairly routine for psychology students, but they almost always happen in social service agencies. Lantinga asked herself why a student interested in teaching couldn't be placed with a professor. She approached Kroeze Visser, and they outlined a placement for credit. One of their goals was for Kroeze Visser to see the amount and kind of work a college professor does.

To begin, they read and studied books and articles on teaching. Kroeze Visser then observed introductory psychology classes by two professors and discussed her observations with these professors and the social sciences dean to understand what kinds of things were important to be a good teacher. Lantinga also

guided Kroeze Visser through a review of several introductory textbooks to give her an idea of what to look for in choosing a text and had Kroeze Visser develop a one-credit course on Planning for Graduate School. The culmination of the semester was having Kroeze Visser teach three class sessions in an introductory psychology class. She also prepared and graded assignments. Both Lantinga and Dean Jasper Lesage observed her classes and shared their observations with her.

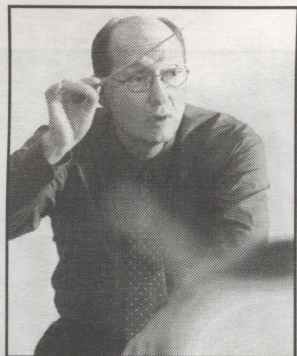
Teaching was the highlight of the semester for Kroeze Visser. She not only enjoyed preparing for the classes but was surprised at how much she enjoyed making the actual presentations.

"I found I could actually be engaged with the students while I was teaching. I thought I'd be so absorbed in what I was saying that I wouldn't be able to think about the process." But she could, and she became even more convinced of her decision to pursue teaching as a career.

The semester-long experience had other benefits, too. Lantinga and Kroeze Visser developed a mentoring relationship that they believe a woman student could only have with a woman faculty member. Kroeze Visser says she was able to be open in a way she would not have been able to do with a male faculty member. She had an opportunity to get a woman's perspective on institutional and professional issues as well as Lantinga's reflections on issues involved in teaching.

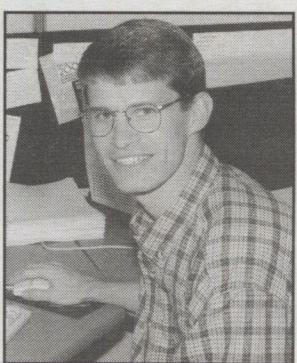
Kroeze Visser applauds any efforts faculty make to encourage students to develop their gifts. Although she planned already early in her college career to go to graduate school, many students don't think about it as an option—especially women, she says. Encouragement like that which she received from Lantinga could be an important part of getting more students—especially women—to use their God-given gifts in leadership positions to help shape our institutions and communities.

Faculty News



Dr. Henry Duitman

The professional involvements of Dordt faculty members outside the classroom reveal Dordt's commitment to provide educational leadership in the Christian community as well as among its own students. By sharing these activities, we hope to provide fellow Christians with further resources, ideas, and encouragement as they work to be of service in Christ's kingdom.



Dr. Ethan Brue

Dr. Henry Duitman, conductor of Dordt's band and orchestra, conducted a Northwest Iowa Bandmasters Association Honors Band in Sioux City on January 6, 2001. Over 100 of the finest high school musicians in Northwest Iowa participated in the day-long event which culminated in an evening concert.

Three members of the Faculty Status Committee, **Drs. Wayne Kobes, Charles Veenstra, and Del Vander Zee**, attended the annual meeting for the American Association for Higher Education in Tampa, Florida, from January 31 to February 3. The sectionals they attended focused on post-tenure review, which is being considered by the Faculty Status Committee.

Agriculture Professor **Dr. Duane Bajema** participated in the 27th National Agricultural Education Research Conference in San Diego from December 6 - 9, 2000.

Physics Professor **Dr. Arnold Sikkema's** article "Science: A Cultural Activity" appeared in January's *Reformed Perspective*.

Dr. Ethan Brue from Dordt's engineering department has been recently notified by the Iowa Board of Engineering Licensing and Examination that he passed their Principles and Practices examination to meet the engineering experience requirements for official engineering registration in the state of Iowa. Brue is now a licensed professional engineer in the state of Iowa.

Dr. John Van Dyk, director of the Center for Educational Services, spent three weeks traveling to schools in the Far East. He addressed a conference of Christian college

principals on the topic "What is Christian higher education?" at Bishop Appasamy College for Arts and Sciences in Coimbatore, India, on January 17. From January 19-22, he conducted seminars and workshops for school teachers, college professors, education students, and other Christian educators in Seoul, Korea. On January 24 and 25 he led two seminars for Christian teachers in the Philippines. While there he met with a variety of Christian educators and organizations.

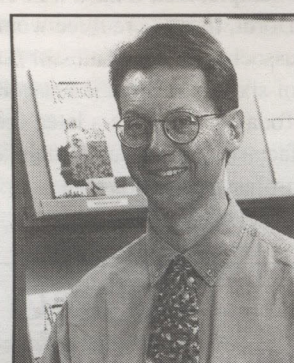
English professors **Dave and Jeri Schelhaas** conducted a workshop on teaching poetry and fiction for the Southwest Minnesota Teachers Association on January 10.

Dr. Benjamin Kornelis conducted the Dordt Concert Choir as the guest choir at the Northwest Iowa Choral Association's High School Honor Choir Festival, held annually at Dordt. He also was guest conductor of the Mass Choir at the annual LeMars (Iowa) Church Choir Festival. The festival involves many LeMars church choirs from various denominations and raises money and canned goods for local food banks.

Social Work Professor **Jim Vanderwoerd's**

review of the book *Who Will Provide? The Changing Role of Religion in American Social Welfare* by Mary Jo Bane et al (Westview Press, 2000) will be published in the Spring issue of *Social Work and Christianity*.

On February 4-6, **Dr. Joan Ringerwold** attended "A Colloquium for Organists, Pastors, Theologians, Liturgists, and Organ Builders" on "The Organ in Christian Worship" at Princeton Theological Seminary. The event, also a celebration of the installation of the Joe Engle organ built by Paul Fritts & Company Organ Builders, allowed Ringerwold to see her former student Martin Tel ('89), the C.F. Seabrook Director of Music at Princeton Seminary, where he conducts three choirs, plays the organ for daily worship services, and teaches courses in church music.



Jim Vanderwoerd



Dr. Joan Ringerwold

Sports updates

Rhoda retires as women's basketball coach

Corey Westra
Sports Information Director

Dr. Len Rhoda will retire as the Dordt College women's basketball coach after this season. Rhoda has been the women's basketball coach at Dordt College for the last twenty-one seasons, dating back to 1979-1980. From 1970-77, Rhoda was the men's basketball coach. He has posted over 300 all-time collegiate wins in his career and has taught in the health, physical education, and recreation department since 1970. Dr. Rhoda will continue as a professor and head men's tennis coach at Dordt.

"I feel very good about this move," said Rhoda. "Dordt College is an outstanding Christian college, and I have enjoyed nothing but positive experiences with the women's basketball program. It's been a privilege to work at this institution as a teacher and coach with outstanding young people," added Rhoda.

Glenn Bouma will take over the head coaching position for the women starting with the 2001-2002 season. Bouma, an Iowa Hall of Fame boys high school coach at Unity Christian High School in Orange City, Iowa, has been director of the recreation center at Dordt since 1997. He will continue in that posi-

tion as he takes on coaching responsibilities.

Bouma coached the Knights of Unity Christian for twenty years from 1977 to 1997 and compiled a 318-118 all-time record, with two Iowa State Basketball Championships in 1986 (1A) and 1994 (2A). Bouma was inducted into the Iowa High School Hall of Fame at the 2000 Iowa Boys State Basketball Tournament.

"I am looking forward to this opportunity," said Bouma. "When you step away from something you enjoy for four years, it's exciting to come back and enjoy the game again and coach it," he added.

"I see basketball as an important part of the Dordt College philosophy, which is to nurture Christian maturation by way of positive experiences while playing basketball. There is no doubt that this will be a learning experience, but I hope to use my experiences as a teacher, coach, and official make this a beneficial experience for all involved."

Bouma has the utmost respect for the years of service Rhoda has given Dordt College as a coach and teacher. "You hate to see excellent people step away from something they love so much, and we should be thankful for everything that Dr. Rhoda has given to this institution, the student athletes, and the game of basketball," he said.



Dr. Len Rhoda coached his last game as head women's coach this semester.

Women's basketball season ends on a good note

The Dordt College women's basketball team ended its season on a good note by defeating Martin Luther College of Minnesota by a score of 80-66. The Lady Defenders had a rough, yet hard-fought season, posting a record of 4-22.

Junior forward Serena Van Beek from Hartley, Iowa, was the Lady Defenders' biggest offensive threat this year, leading the team with 324 points and leading in three pointers with 31. Freshman Alexis Smith from Castlewood, South Dakota, was second in scoring with 309 points, but led the team in field goal percentage with 52 percent from the floor and in rebounding with 252.

The women's basketball team lost only one senior this year, Heather Broekhuis from Mountlake Terrace, Washington. As starting point guard this season, Broekhuis dished off a team high 99 assists and was third in scoring

with 165 points, shooting 77 percent from the free throw line. Broekhuis's leadership on and off the court, along with her offensive and defensive talent, will be missed next year.

Men's basketball season rolls into playoffs

The Dordt College men's basketball team advanced into Great Plains Athletic Conference playoffs under the direction of Coach Greg Van Soelen. Dordt's 13-12 (7-9 GPAC) record allowed the team to claim the eighth spot in tournament play. The first tournament game became a battle of Sioux County basketball when Dordt faced number one Northwestern.

The season ended with a heartbreaking loss to the Red Raiders who were ranked eighth in the nation.

Dordt's team was led in offense by sophomore Evan Beimers from Sioux Center, who netted 383 points and was second in total

assists with 65. He also led the squad in rebounds, taking down 139. Close behind Beimers was senior Dylan Haak from Outlook, Washington, who led the team in three pointers with 57 (47 percent). He also recorded 351 points, pulled down 123 rebounds, and shot 82 percent from the free throw line.

Dordt will lose four key players to graduation this May, including Haak. Graduating seniors include guard Michael Ribbens from Sioux Center, who leads the team in assists with 76; Brent Tapper from Dike, Iowa, who led the team with 28 blocks; and Matt Van Essen from Hull, Iowa, a guard who creates a major defensive threat for Dordt's opponents.



Senior Dylan Haak led the team in three pointers this season.

Indoor track boasts eight All-Americans

Dordt's indoor track season started with the Dordt College Invitational in Dordt's recreation center. Three events qualified for nationals already at this first meet: the women's 4x800-meter relay team of Lisa Cannegieter, Emily Kauk, Jessica Rowenhorst, and Rebecca Demerest; women's high jumper Susan Schaap; and men's 800 meter runner Ron Kingma.

The men's 4x800-meter relay team of Ron Kingma, Jeff Taylor, Marcus Scholten, and Jon Dekkers qualified for nationals at the Defender Gold Club Invitational during Homecoming.

The Dordt College Indoor team also competed in two meets at the University of South Dakota in Vermillion, where the women's 4x400-meter relay team of Jackie Eekhoff, Sarah Haan, Kristi Meendering, and Lisa Cannegieter; triple jumper Erica Ton; pole vaulter Jill Starkenburg; and the men's 4x400 meter relay team of Eric Carlson, Mark Buwalda, Jon Dekkers, and Ron Kingma qualified for the national meet.

At that meet in Johnson City, Tennessee, Dordt College gained eight new NAIA All-Americans. Both the women's and men's 4x800 meter relay teams earned NAIA All-American status with their finishes at the meet. The women ran a time of 9:32.12 and finished sixth. The men ran a time of 7:45.74 and finished fifth. Ron Kingma was named an individual All-American by placing sixth in the 800 meters with a time of 1:54.29 in the finals.



On Homecoming weekend, Dordt hosted the Defender Gold Club Invitational meet in the recreation center.

DORDT COLLEGE STAFF POSITIONS

Admissions Counselor (Two-year position, possibly longer, beginning July 1, 2001)

Primary responsibilities include contacting students by phone, as well as at schools, churches, homes and college fairs, and promoting Dordt College and a general interest in Christian higher education. Qualifications include a B.A. degree with excellent public relations and written and oral communication skills, as well as a desire to work with prospective students who are high school age. Candidates must have a valid driver's license, be willing to do extensive traveling, and work some evenings and weekends.

Computer Programmer (beginning April 1, 2001)

Duties include working with computer services' programming staff to help handle computer requests. Candidates should be able to work comfortably with end users and assist in overall database design. They should possess creativity, flexibility, and problem solving skills. Dordt College develops applications with an Informix database in a UNIX environment. Familiarity with 4GL, SQL, and ODBC is required, along with a four-year degree in computers or a business related field. Experience in an academic setting or with graphical application development is desired.

Health Care Professional/Instructor (beginning July 2001)

Dordt College has an opening for a full-time health care professional to provide clinical services to the student body and serve as administrator and instructor for the Health Sciences Program. Qualifications: M.S.N. with Advanced Registered Nurse Practitioner (ARNP) Certificate and teaching experience.

Qualified candidates with a personal commitment to a Reformed, Biblical faith that is compatible with the mission of Dordt College should forward a letter of application and resume to Susan Droog, Director of Human Resources, Dordt College, 498 Fourth Avenue NE, Sioux Center, IA 51250 Phone: (712) 722-6017, Fax: (712) 722-1198, E-mail: sdroog@dordt.edu

Dordt College encourages the nominations and candidacies of women, minorities, and persons with disabilities.

DORDT COLLEGE

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Upcoming Events

Baseball

We're planning outings to major league baseball games in the following cities this summer:

Milwaukee San Diego
Seattle St. Louis
Toronto

Watch the website and your mail for more information. Want to help plan one of these events or another in your area? Contact the alumni office. We're here to help you stay connected with other alumni and Dordt. We'll be glad to help you put together an event in your area.

Plan Ahead—Europe in 2002

Mark your calendars and start saving for our next alumni trip. We're planning another European tour in 2002, with an option of a five-day bike and boat tour of the Netherlands. The dates are June 24-28 for the bike-boat tour and June 29-July 11 for the trip through the "heart of Europe." Professor Case Boot will serve as the guide for this three-week adventure. Who do you know who knows the Netherlands and Europe and Dordt alumni better than Case Boot? More details, including costs, will be available later this spring. Call your friends and make a date for Amsterdam in 2002.

correction

Darrin Berg continues to perform solo; not with The Immigrants, as we wrote in the last issue of the *Voice*.

Alumni



Kids found plenty to do at Homecoming 2001.

By Judy Hagey

Traditions

Most colleges have venerable traditions that are passed on with much ceremony and pride: homecoming bonfires or parades, golden alums participating in graduation, or freshman initiation activities repeated annually so that each generation shares in the experience. Tradition involves passing something from generation to generation. By that definition Dordt is just "coming of age." We're into our second generation of students, but as an institution not yet fifty years old, we do not yet have many well-established traditions.

Although it may not rise to the level of tradition, Homecoming is one activity that has been around Dordt longer than any other. Since the early 1970s alumni have been invited to return to campus for a weekend. Early homecomings were scheduled as

now, during basketball season. Some experimenting was done with holding an alumni weekend at other times—such as the fall during the Tri-State Teachers meetings—but since the mid-1980s, Homecoming has been a winter event at Dordt.

The challenge for an institution as young as Dordt is to establish traditions that stand the test of time and convey to the next generation the purpose and value of a Dordt education. Our Distinguished Alumni Series is one attempt to do that. Now in its tenth year, the Distinguished Alumni program recognizes one graduate who exemplifies what Dordt stands for. In the process of identifying the honoree, we recognize that many alumni are humbly and obediently living out their calling in a variety of settings. Selecting one individual to represent the alumni body is a daunting task. Our intent is not so much to single out one individual as it is to thank God for the opportunities and ways he uses willing hands, minds, and

Arthur Atsma ('87) wowed a large crowd of alumni and their children with his sleight of hand and music.

An alumni vocal ensemble re-lived their choir days and entertained at Friday night's banquet under the direction of choir director Dr. Ben Kornelis



hearts to advance his kingdom.

It is my privilege to be part of the process of identifying and selecting the Distinguished Alum and notifying the person selected. The person's common response is, "Why me? Surely other Dordt graduates are equally or more worthy?" Perhaps it's an ingrained sense of total depravity that makes Dordt alumni so reluctant to be recognized. More likely it's a good understanding of and commitment to Dordt's mission—to use their education to serve others. Or as Judy Brueggemann put it, "doing your best to meet the needs around you." To all our alumni who live out of that commitment, may God continue to bless you and use you to make a difference.

Homecoming photo album

There was something for almost everyone at Homecoming 2001 (except those who like balmy temperatures). Distinguished Alumna Judy (Arends) Brueggemann ('72) shared her career and faith journey with students, faculty, and other alumni throughout the week.

A large crowd was on hand for the final double header home games, despite the persistent wintry weather. Although neither the men nor women were able to pull off a win, the fans were treated to two fine games.

Coach Len Rhoda was recognized for his contributions to Dordt's athletic program.

The kids' carnival attracted children of all ages, while the hospitality room offered plenty of food and the chance to re-connect with old friends.



Dordt's Dynamic Dance team entertained.

Jenn Hillenga ('98) displayed her award-winning photography in the first solo alumni art show.



ECHO alums work in agricultural development

Sonya Jongsma Knauss



Alums Dan Sonke and Dawn (Bakker) Berkelaar described ECHO's work to President Carl Zylstra during his visit there earlier this year.

Two Dordt alums have been contributing to the fight against world hunger through their work for a unique agricultural ministry in North Fort Myers, Florida. Dawn (Bakker) '96 Berkelaar and Dan Sonke ('94) say their work is a good way to combine their interests in missions and agriculture.

The Educational Concerns for Hunger Organization (ECHO) is a non-profit, Christian organization that has a unique ministry to overseas missionaries and agricultural development workers. It works as a support for other mission organizations, using its resources to network and share ideas about tropical agriculture.

"There really aren't many resources available for people who go and work in areas with really poor people and climate troubles," Berkelaar says. ECHO publishes materials related to tropical agriculture and development, sharing ideas on how to improve agri-

culture in developing countries.

Since beginning work for the organization last July, Berkelaar has divided her time between technical writing as assistant editor of the quarterly publication *ECHO Development Notes* (EDN) and researching technical requests that are sent in from overseas.

"The questions vary," Berkelaar says. In one week ECHO might receive several dozen requests for information on topics as diverse as "What information do you have about frog farming?" or "How can we process palm oil?"

While the ECHO staff researches and responds to requests daily, sometimes these requests also lead to research resulting in an article for EDN, says Sonke, who serves as Director of Information and Seed Programs. He wants to include an article in EDN that gives information on growing grapes, which are not tropical plants, in a tropical climate.

"One of the biggest forces for ideas comes from the question and answer service we maintain for missionaries," he says. "A

2001 Distinguished Alum

Judy Brueggeman says education is an exciting place to be

Sally Jongsma

As a high school student, Judy (Arends) Brueggeman ('72) says she thought more about where she wanted to go to college than what she wanted to do once she got there. Her brother had gone to Dordt and she was set on following him.

"In my mind the choices open to a woman then were to be a secretary, nurse, or teacher," she says. Since Dordt only offered teacher training, the choice was easy. She decided to teach. Thirty years later, she's never been sorry about her choice of either career or college.

"My years at Dordt were four of the most important of my life, years in which I formed the perspective upon which I've built my life and career." The fact that God rules over everything and that we are called to help redeem our world for him, she says, has pushed her to do the best she can in whatever she does.

Listening to her colleagues speak appreciatively of her work and seeing the number of awards Brueggeman has earned in the last ten years testify to her commitment to do her best. Principal of Harris-Lake Park Community School in Harris, Iowa, since 1979, Brueggeman was named State of Iowa Elementary Principal of the Year and National Distinguished Principal in 1993. In 1998, she and her school earned a First in the Nation (FINE) Award in student achievement in reading with technology, and in the same year she earned the Milken Family Foundation National Educator Award. She has served on Iowa's Board of Educational Examiners since 1993, chairing that board since 1997. The board licenses all teachers in Iowa.

In chapel during Homecoming week, Brueggeman told the Dordt community that she depends on God for each day's work, relying on him for strength to be a servant-leader. Working for Christ's kingdom must happen in public schools too, she says.

When her superintendent asked her to reflect on why teachers enjoy working for her, she says she realized it was largely because she works hard to help them be successful.

"I became more aware that leading by serving is what I needed to do. Leadership is an act of stewardship, not power," she says. For her that means being available for her teachers and students, solving problems, offering them resources, developing trust, enabling them to do their best, walking in their shoes.

"I had to learn how to run the boiler for the janitor if he was sick and answer the phone for



Judy Brueggeman spoke to students in chapel and alumni at a banquet during Homecoming week.

my secretary if she was busy," she says.

It's easy to see that Brueggeman enjoys her work. Her eyes sparkle and she becomes animated as she talks about the joy of watching children learn and helping teachers teach. She is continually looking for new ways to encourage and promote learning. One of those ways, she believes, is through thoughtful use of technology. Technology has, in many ways, helped change schools for the better by allowing teachers to teach more specifically to the needs of individual students, she says. She describes how using software programs can benefit both slower and advanced students.

"My students read an average of 157 books per year," she says. The school participates in an accelerated reading program that offers comprehension tests to accompany thousands of books in the school library. A teacher couldn't get through a fraction of that many books if they were all taught in class with everyone reading the same books, she says. And while the program was geared to students who had trouble with reading, it has also been a boon for advanced students, she says, because it allows them to go on the next level of difficulty more quickly than a whole?

"It's much easier today to teach to individual students," she says. Teachers have more information at their fingertips. Work done on computers can be quickly analyzed to see students' progress as well as strengths and weaknesses, and teachers can plan accordingly.

But technology is only part of what makes

education today exciting.

"We have so much research to help us be effective teachers," she says. Teachers don't have to just follow the example of a favorite teacher from their past, even though they may well carry some valuable insights with them from good experiences. Research, she says, helps them know so much more about how children learn. For example, based on brain research, teachers today know that the first place a child's energy goes is to meet basic physical needs, then emotional needs, and finally cognitive needs. If a child comes to school hungry or distraught, a teacher will have little success getting him to think about school work, no matter how dynamic the classroom, she says.

But teachers today also face big challenges. "Many children today are hurting and need support; they need someone to believe in them. Teachers need to know much more than subject matter to be good teachers," Brueggeman says. She finds that given the support and resources they need, teachers quickly develop the skills they need to be good teachers. And that's where she comes in—always ready to provide resources, lend a hand, give them information, and solve problems.

Brueggeman was quick to point out to the many future teachers she spoke to during Homecoming week that she was a "run-of-the-mill student" when she was at Dordt—although she joked that maybe that's near the top anywhere else. It is doing her best and trying to meet the needs of her students that has led her to where she is today.

"I did not consciously intend to become a principal—particularly in a community school. When I left Dordt I wanted to teach in a Christian school." She did for several years. But gradually she realized she wanted to make a difference in more than her own classroom. She returned to school for a master's degree in administration, but there were few if any women principals in Iowa Christian schools in the late '70s and only three in Iowa. She took what she expected to be a short-term position to gain experience in Harris-Lake Park, fully expecting to move to a Christian school after a few years.

But then she met her husband, who runs his family farm. Because they committed to living on the farm, she never really even considered another school, even though many opportunities presented themselves. "You bloom where you're planted," she says. And she has. She continues to bring her vision of education and servant leadership to students and teachers in the community school in Harris, Iowa.

survive, they must interact with global markets.

"We encourage people to introduce new crops for nutritional reasons, but we're also aware that economic forces are much more persuasive than mere nutrition or health reasons," Sonke says. "We are very open to helping people come up with ideas for a new, marketable crop, as opposed to merely subsistence crops."

Sonke, who plans to return to his studies at graduate school next fall, says he really felt the Lord's leading during his time at Dordt to prepare him for his work at ECHO. "I've always had a strong interest in horticulture and missions," he says. "When I first heard about ECHO, I immediately thought it sounded like a place I wanted to spend some time."

ECHO is currently going through a five-year planning phase and is talking about ways it can strengthen some links they have with college agriculture departments, such as Dordt's.

Berkelaar feels that ECHO fulfills a vital role. "For people who feel called to agricultural missions, ECHO has a unique ministry."

“

Leadership is

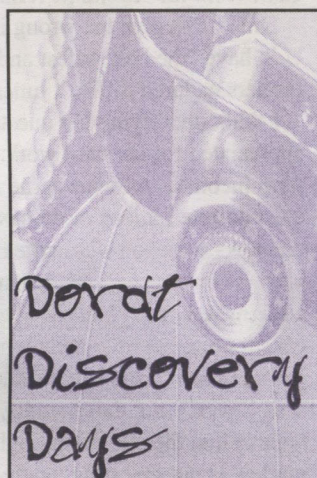
an act of stewardship,

not power.

”

Call for Distinguished Alumni Nominees

Do you know an alumnus/a who exemplifies what Dordt stands for—someone who lives and works out of the principles of Reformed Christianity? We welcome your submissions, along with your reasons for your nomination. Send them to the alumni office or e-mail: alumni@dordt.edu.



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missionary in Kenya wrote to us and said, 'I'm thinking about growing grapes here and wondering if it's even possible. What can you tell me?' We put together a package of information from our library, the Internet, and some contacts we knew. We've had others ask the same question over the last few years, and so now we're planning to write an article for the newsletter."

Another way ECHO ministers to overseas missionaries is by providing them with samples of seeds. The organization has a warehouse with hundreds of different kinds of seeds which they send out in small packets for missionaries to test in their gardens to see if it's possible to use as a new crop.

"We try to introduce them to new seeds they may not know about and that may work well with their climate," Sonke says. "It's not like we're scouring the jungle for plants and trying to see if you can eat them or not. These are things that are well-known crops in some parts of the world. They work well and maybe could

be used similarly in other parts of the world."

One example of this is the moringa tree, a plant that has been used for centuries in India, but was less well known in Africa and almost unknown in Latin America. The plant is very nutritious and has many uses, including for food or to bolster other crops.

Berkelaar's husband, Edward, who also works at ECHO, has been doing experiments to double check results of research done in Nicaragua on the effect a spray made from moringa leaves had on vegetable crops. They found thirty percent yield increases for a whole range of crops. Berkelaar found that radishes had a ninety-four percent yield increase and beans had a sixty-five percent yield increase.

"There's so much talk of genetic engineering in crops, but there are simple things that could really increase crop yield," Berkelaar says.

Sonke says he has mixed feelings about the global economy which is developing, but he says it has to be dealt with as a reality. People deep in developing countries are finding that to

Schelhaas writes for Touched by an Angel

Sonya Jongsma Knauss ('97)

It isn't often that popular network television shows tackle big issues like science, faith, and the existence of God. Dordt alum Luke Schelhaas ('96) helped that happen on a recent "Touched by an Angel" episode. In a February program, a fifteen-year-old girl decided to write a research paper trying to scientifically prove the existence of God—partly as an act of defiance against her atheist father, who just happens to be her science teacher.

Schelhaas wrote the script for the episode, his first full-length script-writing experience for the show since he joined the "Touched by an Angel" crew four years ago. Martha Williamson, the show's executive producer, describes the show as "family edgy," meaning it portrays difficult issues in a setting where families feel safe watching together. The show deals with real issues and real people finding the strength to get through difficult times.

"The show tries to show that there's hope, but not that everything's just all peachy and good," Schelhaas explained.

Schelhaas started working for "Touched by an Angel" in Salt Lake City as a production assistant, an entry level position, through contacts he made as a Dordt student on the off-campus Los Angeles Film Studies Program. He did such diverse tasks as shopping, running

to the airport, getting groceries and lunches, answering phones and filing, but his work as

script distributor was the key part of his job.

Two years later he became a writer's assistant, a position he has held for almost two years. He works with writers and producers on the weekly television show's script, giving input on possible changes, proofreading, writing some scenes, fact checking, and lining up consent agreements of copyrighted material.

Since he's not officially a "writer," it was unexpected that Williamson asked him to write the script for an entire episode. In the past, she has asked him to rewrite scenes for an episode, but not write an entire show.

Williamson originally suggested Schelhaas think about writing an episode in which a child comes up with a science fair project to prove the existence of God. After Schelhaas's research and in consultation with Williamson and the show's other writers, the end plot featured a teenage girl who stumbles upon the intelligent design theory in her effort to find out whether God exists.

Schelhaas says he did a substantial amount of research before writing the episode, and he became very excited about what he learned.

"There are quite a few books giving strong evidence that evolution as a theory has a lot of holes in it," he says. "The evidence doesn't necessarily point to the God of the Bible, but there is strong evidence for intelligent design, a creator."

Schelhaas says his goal was to tell a good story, bringing out what the universe tells us about how amazing God is, while at the same time avoiding sounding like he was only trying to make a statement.

"Ultimately the episode does show that both science and faith are necessary," he explains. "What we can know through science and faith and the Bible complement each other as we search for the truth about the way things are."

He started thinking about the episode a year ago and spent some time working on it last June during the show's six-week break.

The first step was coming up with a six to eight page outline, giving the story its basic plot and structure, and following a four-act structure with three act breaks for commercials. Each act break had to be preceded by a new piece of

information, something that would keep viewers watching through the commercials to see what happens next, Schelhaas said.

He had more time than writers usually do to work on the episode, and his outline went through various changes before he began writing the actual fifty-two-page script a month before the crew filmed the episode. After finishing a first draft of the script, Schelhaas flew to Los Angeles twice to work directly with the show's other writers and to put out the final draft.

"It was very much a collaborative process," he says. "They're not all my words in the final episode—although for the most part it's my plot, my take on the relationship of the characters."

Schelhaas was on set while the episode was filmed, which took a little over a week. The writer is on set in case anything needs rewriting on the spot or to make sure the actors don't stray too much from the dialogue.

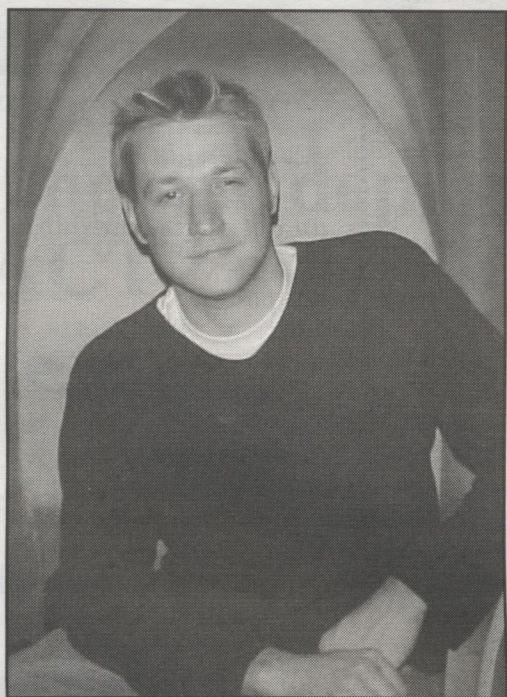
"It was an amazing experience to sit there and to see the words and characters I wrote come to life," Schelhaas says. "This has been a tremendous opportunity."

Schelhaas would eventually like to work in film. He has written a sixteen-minute film, which crew members from "Touched by an Angel" helped him put together. The film, directed by a friend of his, has been submitted to a number of independent film festivals and has so far been accepted to a festival in Utah and one in Southern California. He also has written a feature-length screen play, which he would someday like to shoot, but he says it would take at least three million dollars to be able to do that.

Despite that obstacle, Schelhaas feels called to be a salt and light in the world of film, doing what he can to help redeem this area of culture.

"The film and television industry has been one area that Christians have seemed to stay away from," he says, adding that the entertainment industry will continue to have a huge influence whether or not Christians are involved.

"I enjoy being creative and feel God has called me to this work and placed me here," he says. "It's given me a chance to do what I love and to have a positive influence."



Schelhaas says he hopes someday Dordt will have a department devoted to film and television. Yet, he believes that focusing on literature and writing while at Dordt was very beneficial and, in fact, is what has helped him most in his current work.

Letter to the Editor

"Why would I mention that half the farm income came from the federal government," asked a concerned Iowa farmer who called me after she read the alumni profile in the last issue of the *Voice*. She cited my passing reference in that issue in the article on the "Corn Cam." She said that only ten percent of their income came from the federal government.

Didn't this give the wrong idea about agriculture? Doesn't the U.S. have "the best, safest and cheapest food," she asked. Haven't farmers endured difficult times?

I think underlying her questions was a feeling of not being appreciated for her hard work. To me, the current situation with farm income represents at the least a red flag that deep problems exist despite billions of dollars in payments from the U.S. government. As someone who writes about agriculture and respects the work of farmers and the demands of consumers, I believe this issue merits more than passing attention. Ironically, I think these questions get so little attention because of the abundance of inexpensive food for most consumers. In a free market, people value scarce goods, not those readily and cheaply available. I also believe that the public—through the government and through the market—is not investing nearly enough in agriculture.

But why mention the income issue? During recent weeks, I have heard a university economist and a marketing advisor warn farmers that an urban-dominated Congress may look hard at the current level of government payments to farmers. Last October, Dan Glickman, then the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture, noted that nearly half of (net) farm income had come from the federal government. Glickman said he did not begrudge farmers the assistance, but said the level indicated a need for improving U.S. farm policy. In Iowa during the 1990s, an average of 54.68 percent of net farm income came from direct government payments, says Mike Duffy, Iowa State University Extension farm management specialist.

I mention this not to castigate farmers. One of the huge issues farmers and others face in a global economy is making long-term investments in land, machinery, and buildings even as capital becomes more and more mobile. Many farmers still feel the effects of the 1997 Asian financial crisis that cut ag exports.

Writing about problems is easy, but where do you start with

solutions? In fifteen years of covering agriculture, one question sticks with me. Rudi Buntzel of the Protestant Farmers Association of Wurttemberg, Germany, said the association's members ask, "who is my neighbor?" That question, which Christ posed in the parable of the good Samaritan, remains relevant today.

In some respects, the issue about government's spending on farm payments is not so much the money itself. It's a matter of seeing whether the good of the public is being advanced, whether people who farm receive a just return for their efforts, whether the earth God created is being cared for. It's a matter of creating and maintaining healthy rural and urban communities, asking whether farmers have a sound footing in a rapidly changing global economy, stopping to ask who will care for elderly citizens if fewer farmers live in our rural communities.

There are other signs of problems. Recently, a news release from the European ag corporation, Syngenta, announced its donation of \$500,000 to U.S. food banks. According to Syngenta, poverty rates in Iowa's rural farm counties are twenty-two percent higher than in metropolitan ones. Why is this so in a state that is first in the nation in production of corn, soybeans, pork, and eggs?

Syngenta made its donation to America's Second Harvest, a food bank which says that about twenty-eight million people rely on food banks for their food. That's one in every ten. It's also about the population of Canada. This points up a troubling paradox. Food is relatively inexpensive, with U.S. consumers spending eleven percent of disposable income on food. But it still isn't cheap enough for people relying on food banks.

The U.S. public has financially supported farmers through repeated disasters due to weather and economic downturns. Farmers have worked hard to provide safe and healthy food which most of the public can afford. Yet this contract between farmers and the public seems to be fraying. How long will the public continue its support? How long will farmers and their children remain in a difficult profession?

With a strong agricultural department and alumni who farm in the United States, Canada, and overseas, Dordt is in a unique position to address some of these issues. Coming up with answers is difficult, but the questions are worth asking. As the bumper sticker on many a farm pickup says, "If you eat, you are involved in agriculture."

Dan Zinkand ('81) is the crops editor of *Iowa Farmer Today*.

Alumni notes

Marlin Broek ('70) was selected as the Phoenix, Arizona, 2A Metro Region Athletic Director of the Year.

Tina (La Brenz) '75) Chan graduated in May from Temple University with a master's degree in education. Tina has taught English as a foreign language in China, Korea, Pakistan, and Japan. She and her husband, Carl, a U.S. Foreign Service Officer, and their three children relocated to the Washington, D.C., area this summer after spending seventeen of the last twenty years abroad in the U.S. diplomatic service.

Major Roger Wallenburg ('83) was recently reassigned to Springfield, Missouri, and is teaching military science at Southwest Missouri State University. He is also a part-time faculty member at Evangel University, teaching ROTC classes.

Robert Miedema ('85) works as the Northwest Iowa Representative for Fellowship of Christian Athletes, an outreach ministry aimed primarily at high school and college athletes.

Scott and **Doris (Scholten)** '85) Wolbrink live in Sioux Falls, South Dakota. Doris is a loan officer at Dacotah Bank, and Scott is the director of finance and human resources at Medical X-Ray Center.

Darrell and Michelle Fynaardt ('88) live in a suburb of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, where Darrell operates the chiropractic office he opened in 1990.

Barry and Lynae (Rozenboom), ex '90) McFarland live in Kirksville, Missouri, where Barry is a physical therapy assistant at an outpatient sports medicine clinic. Lynae stays home with Grant (5), Matt (2), and Ben (three months). She also teaches piano lessons and directs three choirs and a drama team at her church.

Case Vandegraaf ('91) works at the family dredging company (Dutch Dredging) on different projects throughout Europe while his wife Marjan takes care of Janneke and looks for work as a human resources consultant. They live in Dordrecht, the Netherlands.

Alumni notes

Dan and Kim Koole ('91) moved to Broomfield, Colorado, in October of 1998. Dan works for Design Fabricators as a project manager building fixtures for Starbucks Coffee stores.

Karen (Bakker, '92) Stirling and her family have been living in Seoul, South Korea, for the last year and a half studying Korean and preparing for life-time work in East Asia. Karen and her husband, Alan, and their children, Tommy, Olivia, and Benjamin, plan to move to Northern China in 2002 to begin work with refugees.

Will and Michelle (Vander Ley, '93) Robison currently live in Quincy, Illinois, with their two daughters, Kayla (4) and Jenna (two months). Michelle is a child and adolescent therapist at Chaddock, a residential treatment/outpatient program. Will also works at Chaddock as a child counselor for emotionally disturbed youth.

Eric and Sarah (Van Hofwegen) Van Dyken ('93, ex '93) live in Lake Lillian, Minnesota. Eric is working for Renville County as an environmental officer. Sarah sells Tupperware and stays busy with their boys, Christopher (7), Jacob (5), and Simon (six months).

Mark Huyer ('93) and Angela Struyk-Huyer ('88) have recently moved to Burnstown, Ontario, from British Columbia. Angela left her job as a teacher-librarian for the Langley School Board and is now a full-time homemaker for their children, Catrina (5) and Levi (3). Mark began working as a teacher in an alternative high school in Pembroke, Ontario.

Following Doug's graduation from the University of California Irvine in 1996, Doug and Carla (Visser) Brouwer ('94, '93) moved to Escondido. Doug is a project engineer at XCELLSIS, an automotive company that designs and builds prototype fuel cell engines. Carla stays home with their infant son, Noah.

Kendra (Greiss, '94) Morgan works part-time as a paralegal at the law firm of Oostra & Bierma in Sioux Center. Scott Morgan ('95) is a CPA and

works at Trans Ova Genetics in Sioux Center as the CFO/Controller.

Brian Conley ('95) works for the city of Coquille, Oregon, as a Paramedic/ Firefighter. Conley is also a Deputy Sheriff for Coos County and serves on the county's multi-agency S.W.A.T. team as paramedic, providing medical care for the team.

Valerie Vande Voort ('95) graduated from DePaul University in Chicago with a master's degree in taxation. Val continues to work as a tax compliance manager at Ernst & Young in downtown Chicago.

Grant and Brenda (Kropp, '96) Anderson live in Garner, Iowa. Brenda works part-time at Manufacturers Bank & Trust as a loan processor. Grant is a cattle and grain farmer. They have two children, Derek (2) and Mara (two months).

Denise Houtsma ('97) is the owner of Riverside Health Club, which has locations in Mt. Vernon and Sedro Woolley, Washington.

Dan Rueck ('99) is in Belize, Central America, to work with Target Earth once again. He is helping coordinate the Global Stewardship Studies Program.

Curtis Dykstra ('99) is a Level I ranger for Merchant Millpond State Park in North Carolina.

Chris Archer ('00) has completed his training and is now a naval officer.

Marriages

Scott Wolbrink and Doris Scholten ('85), 8/12/00
Dan Koole ('91) and Kim Steenhoek, 12/16/00
Brent Witte and Dawn Vander Meulen ('94), 6/24/00

Jeff Paluska and Danielle Van Rooyen ('96), 8/5/00
Paul Loomans (ex '97) and Erica Schlieve, 4/10/99
Brett Lindskoog ('99) and Andra Flikkema ('99), 12/22/00

Karl Bos and Alyssa De Ruyter ('00), 1/5/00
Kendra Hoekstra (ex '89) and Larry Schnabel, 10/28/00

Future Defenders

Mark and Teresa Bakker ('77), Vera Elizabeth, 2/22/92, adopted 12/19/00
Galen and Marlene (De Jong, '84) Van Maanen, Trent Jacob, 8/22/00
Gerald and Pamela (Wind, '84) Westervelt, Jillian Ruth and Larissa Joy, 6/27/00
Harlan and Nelva (Pennings, '85) Huitink, Bryce Colin, 5/9/00
Steve and Sharon (De Koning) Fopma ('85, '85), Sharlee Joy, 4/19/00
Brian and Susan (Ross) Dykhuizen ('86, '86), Cole Robert, 1/11/01
Kevin and Betty (Addink, '86) Moss, Brennan Josiah, 6/22/00
Richard and Bev (de Jager, ex '87) Grisnich, Kaitlyn Christine, 7/13/00
Troy and Brenda Hugen ('87), Taryn Lee, 8/30/00 (Korea), adopted 12/27/00
Wade and Renea (Stremler) De Kam (ex '87, '91), Caleb John, 1/9/01
Brent and Kay (Janssen) Veldkamp ('85, '88), Estela Elizabeth, 1/17/98, adopted 8/18/00
Steven and Brenda (Klyn, '88) Spoelstra, Phillip John, 11/18/00
Steve and Dawn Peters ('88), Jenna Renee, 1/26/01
Darrell and Michelle Fynaardt ('88), Leah Marie, 5/15/00
Daniel and Kristy Bootsma ('88), Matthew James, 12/8/00
Kent and Tami (Marcus) Zevenbergen ('89, '88), Kayla Nicole, 9/28/00
Dale and Tonia Woudstra ('89), Zachary Dale, 12/8/00
Dave and Sheila (Van Tol, '89) Van Den Brink, Levi Allen, 8/27/00
Rudy and Stacey (Ooms) Tolkamp ('89, '90), Brenna Katryn, 7/21/00
Rob and Diane (Alsum) Krommendyk (ex '90, '93), Chloe Ann, 1/3/01
Barry and Lynae (Rozenboom, ex '90) McFarland, Benjamin Otto, 11/04/00
Jeff and Shonna (Zylstra) Geels ('90, '91), Justin William, 2/1/01
Todd and April (Hofman, ex '91) Kooi, Brennan Scott, 1/4/01
Hank and Brenda (Tuininga, '91) Vroom, Levi Emory, 2/2/01
Greg and Rhonda (Gritters, '91) Holstege, Stephanie Marie, 1/11/01
Curtis and Deborah (Kamps) Smit ('91, '90), Benjamin Curtis, adopted 7/22/00
Harlan and Michele (De Jong) De Boer ('91, '90), Lincoln Joel, 12/15/00
Wayne and Sue (Theune) Dykstra ('91, '92), Abigail Susan, 12/26/00
Michael and Karen (Peters, '92) Christians, Cole Michael, 9/8/00
Eric and Jackie (Martinus, '92) Boss, Wyatt Jacob and Kelly Marie, 7/20/00
Dave and Barb (DuMez, '92) Clevenger, Megan Elizabeth, 12/12/00
Ethan and Donna (Groenendyk) Brue ('92, '91), Rylan Willis, 9/4/00
Bob and Mary Beth (Smith) Pollema ('92, '91), Micah William, 1/26/01
Jeff and Tami (Smeenck) Cleveringa ('92, '93), Caleb Benjamin, 8/16/00
Clary and Stacey (Mulder) Kloosterhof, ('93, '92), Micah Hendrik, 1/20/01
Will and Michelle (Vander Ley, '93) Robison, Jenna Noelle, 12/12/00
Steve and Kristi (Kielstra, '93) Geerlinks, Joshua John, 1/10/01
Eric and Sarah (Van Hofwegen) Van Dyken ('93, ex '93), Simon Douglas, 5/5/00
Brad and Susan Veltkamp ('93), Jadeyn Faith, 1/10/01
Harold and Andrea (Leys) Wieringa ('93, '93), Erin Kathleen, 1/12/01
Doug and Carla (Visser) Brouwer ('94, '93), Noah Logan, 12/28/00
Scott and Kristi (Hoogendoorn '94) Tiedeman, Brendan Reid Tiedeman, 12/13/00
Scott and Heather (De Young) Mellema ('94, ex '94), Keegan Michael, 10/6/00
Scott and Kendra (Griess) Morgan ('95, '94), Kalea Joy, 5/18/00
Christopher and Heidi Brouwer ('95), Nickolas Gerrit, 7/13/00
Ryan and Carmen (Horstman '95) Mulder, Dawson Gabriel, 11/19/00
Dan and Anne (Hoogeveen) Jasper ('95, ex '97), Kara Marie, 11/18/00
Jason and Kristy (Rayhons '96) Pavelka, Blake Anthony and Blaine Austin, 4/23/00
Grant and Brenda (Kropp, '96) Anderson, Mara Renae, 12/3/00
Matt and Carla (Zevenbergen, '96) Eenigenburg, Anika Joy, 1/7/01
Michael and Melinda (Conklin) Flikkema ('96, '96), Tristan Scott, 12/20/00
Mike and Shari (Steendam) Langelaar ('96, '96), Madelyn Elyse, 4/19/00
Matthew and Cheryl (Siepman) Perkins ('96, '97), Casey Melina, 10/28/00
Matt and Marcy (Van Gameron) Kortman ('96, '97), Caleb Robert, 10/14/00
David and Rhonda (Bode, ex '97) Stoltzfus, Morgan Marie, 11/28/00
Paul and Erica Loomans (ex '97), Jacob Andrew, 10/1/00
Bobby and Cami (Kreun, '97) Hopper, Tyler, 2/2/01
Keith and Tricia (Feyer) Hendricks, ('97, '97), Erin Joy, 9/21/00
Anthony and Wendy (Hoogland) Minderhoud ('98, '98), Mitchell James, 5/20/00
Brent and Rochelle De Ruyter ('99), Blake Allan, 9/28/00
Brian and Doni (Dekkers, '00) Kessel, Cody Ryan, 12/19/00
James and Nicole (Hegeman) Vanden Brink ('00, '92), Gracie Lynn, 9/30/00
Jerry and Sharla (Heerema) Loverin ('00, ex'01), Eliese Antoinette, 12/16/00



In Memory of Layton

Written in loving memory of Layton De Vries.

As a Dordt graduate, I was delighted when my son, Layton, decided to attend Dordt College.

I remember the day we brought him and

nearly all his earthly possessions from Pella over Interstate 80 and up Interstate 29 to Sioux Center. It was a long quiet ride. We, Layton and his dad and I, all knew that this was the beginning of something important, but also the end of something precious. Our relationships with each other would never be quite the same after this day.

Too soon the moment I had been dreading for months arrived—it was time to leave Layton and go home. We found a moment alone with him so as not to embarrass him in front of the other guys. We hugged good-bye and I said through my tears, “We love you, we’ll miss you, and we’ll pray for you every day.”

I thought that was a hard day—mercifully not knowing that in less than six and a half years we would have to leave him behind in a grave in Michigan.

Layton was not one to eagerly anticipate new challenges and adventures. Leaving home for college was a bit frightening for him. But in a couple of weeks the tone of his phone conversations changed. The wonderful, loving Dordt community was becoming a comfortable home-away-from-home for him.

It was marvelous watching him grow into new friendships, excel in band and choir, and mature spiritually. Soon Layton loved being at Dordt, and it was obvious that he belonged there. He always wanted us to attend every concert and talent night he was involved in. And we didn’t miss very many. We were there so often that one friend of ours said we should just get an apartment in Sioux Center. Those were happy times, and we delighted in the goodness of God.

God also led Layton to find his wife at Dordt. Layton and Heidi Petersen discovered each other when he was a senior and she was a junior. They were married in New Brighton, Minnesota on July 17, 1999.

Layton taught junior high and high school choral and instrumental music in Prinsburg, Minnesota, for one year and then Layton and Heidi moved to Grand Rapids so Heidi could attend Calvin Seminary. Layton became the choral and instrumental music teacher at Lansing Christian School. He disliked the long commute to Lansing, but he loved the kids and he loved teaching. And he was good at it. So many people in Prinsburg and Lansing said their kids loved him and learned much from him. They learned from him not only musically but also from his Christian example. He was a friend to the friendless; he was always an encourager; he loved unconditionally.

Layton had become a composer during the last year and a half. Some of his words bring us comfort:

But I have trust in your unfailing love.
I rejoice in your saving power.
I will sing and dance and laugh forever.
You are with me in my darkest hour.

From another song:

When darkness drifts around you,
and your eyes close in sleep,
The Lord watches over every breath you take.
And when death comes near to bring you home,
you have no need to fear.

Layton’s life was taken as the result of a tragic accident on his way to Lansing on December 8. People all over joined us in praying for a miracle for Layton, but that was not in God’s plan. Layton died late on December 11. He was only twenty-four, such a promising career ahead of him, so much to look forward to.

Our initial shock and wrenching heartache have given way to an all-pervading sadness. We are thankful that God gave Layton to us for twenty-four years, and for so many wonderful memories. Even though we do not understand God’s timing, we know God is sovereign and in control of everything that happens here on earth. He is a loving God and understands our pain. We know He will carry us through this difficult time.

We thank all of those in the Dordt community who remembered us with cards, notes of encouragement, and prayers. The love and concern of Christian friends have truly overwhelmed and humbled us.

Seeking God’s peace,
Ruth (De Vries) De Vries
Class of ’69

In Memory

Keith Vander Pol ('74) died suddenly on August 15, 2000. He was married for twenty-four years to Deborah (Van Schepen, 'ex '77) and was the father of Mark (23), Rebekah (22), Anna (18), and Rachel (17). He is greatly missed in the Escondido,

California, community where he lived and worked. He was employed for the past seventeen years by Westminster Theological Seminary in Escondido as vice president for development and administration.

CORRESPONDENCE CLIPPING

We at Dordt College are interested in hearing how you are doing and what kinds of events are happening in your life. Please fill out the coupon below and mail to: Alumni Association, Dordt College, 498 4th Ave. NE, Sioux Center, Iowa 51250 or e-mail voice@dordt.edu.

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News Items/Suggestion(s) _____

The *Voice*, an outreach of Dordt College, is sent to you as alumni and friends of Christian higher education. The *Voice* is published four times per year to share information about the programs, activities, and needs of the college. Send address corrections and correspondence to *VOICE*, Dordt College, 498 Fourth Ave. NE, Sioux Center, IA 51250-1697 or e-mail to voice@dordt.edu.

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the VOICE

DORDT COLLEGE

SPRING 2001
 VOLUME 46 NUMBER 3



The number of middle school teachers grows pg. 1

EVENTS

Art

The gallery is in the chapel mezzanine.

Mar. 30 - Apr. 3 Junior Show
 Apr. 16 - 24 Senior Show
 Apr. 26 - May 4 Senior Show
 May 7 - 11 Full senior show

Campus Activities

Events held in the B.J. Haan Auditorium unless indicated.

Apr. 4-6 8:00 a.m. B.J. Haan Education Conference,
 West Commons
 May 11 10:00 a.m. Commencement
 7:30 p.m. Travelogue: Israel
 May 14-19 Elderhostel

Music

All events are held in the B.J. Haan Auditorium.

Apr. 14 7:30 p.m. Sioux County Oratorio Concert
 Apr. 20 7:00 p.m. High School Band Festival
 Apr. 24 7:30 p.m. NISO Spring Concert
 Apr. 26 7:30 p.m. Guest Recital: Kwag Sung-Sup,
 Seo Kyong Suk
 Apr. 27 3:00 p.m. Department Recital
 May 2 7:30 p.m. Instrumental Ensembles Concert:
 Campus Band and Concert Band
 May 4 3:00 p.m. Department Recital
 7:30 p.m. Choral Ensembles Concert

Theater

Plays are performed in the New World Theatre.

Apr. 20, 21 7:30 p.m. *Midsummer Night's Dream*
 (abridged), Te Paske Theatre

Sports

All games listed are home games, except tournaments.

Apr. 3	4:00 p.m.	SB v. Northwestern
Apr. 6	4:00 p.m.	BB v. Hastings
Apr. 7	12:00 p.m.	M/W Track, GPAC Series
	1:00 p.m.	BB v. Nebraska Wesleyan
Apr. 9	4:00 p.m.	SB v. Concordia
Apr. 10	4:00 p.m.	SB v. Southwest Minnesota State
Apr. 13, 14		SB, Northwest Iowa Classic, Orange City, Iowa
Apr. 14	9:00 a.m.	M/W Track, Dordt Invitational
	1:00 p.m.	BB v. Dana
Apr. 16	3:00 p.m.	M Tennis v. Sioux Falls
	4:00 p.m.	SB v. Wayne State
Apr. 18	4:00 p.m.	SB v. Sioux Falls
Apr. 19	3:00 p.m.	W Tennis v. Sioux Falls
	4:00 p.m.	SB v. Dana
Apr. 20, 21		M/W Track, Sioux City Relays
Apr. 21	10:30 a.m.	M/W Tennis v. Midland Lutheran
	1:00 p.m.	BB v. Briar Cliff
Apr. 24	3:00 p.m.	W Tennis v. Northwestern
Apr. 27	12:00 p.m.	M/W Track, Dakota State Invite
	4:00 p.m.	BB v. Concordia
Apr. 27, 28		GPAC M/W Tennis Tournament
		M/W Track, Drake Relays
Apr. 28	1:00 p.m.	BB v. Concordia
May 1	4:00 p.m.	BB v. Northwestern
May 3-5		BB, GPAC Tournament
		SB, GPAC Tournament
May 5	1:00 p.m.	M/W Tennis v. Martin Luther
		M/W Track, GPAC Championships
May 24-26		M/W Track, National NAIA Meet
May 10, 11 SB, NAIA Region IV Tournament		
May 18-22		SB, NAIA National Tournament

**North Central
 Accreditation
 helps college
 assess itself**

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**Iowa teacher of
 the year is
 this year's
 Distinguished
 Alum**

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**Youth ministry
 majors serve in
 local churches**

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